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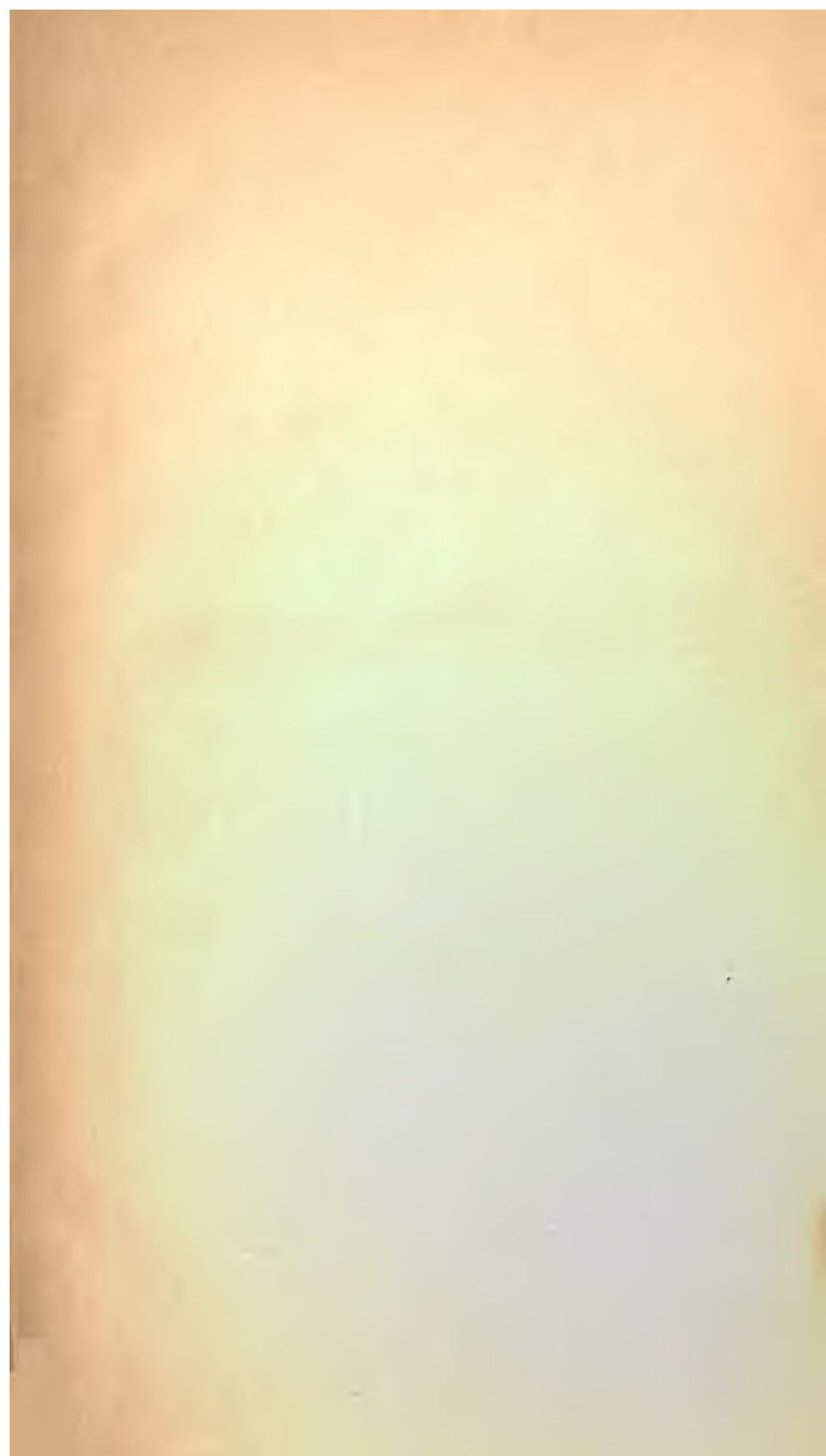
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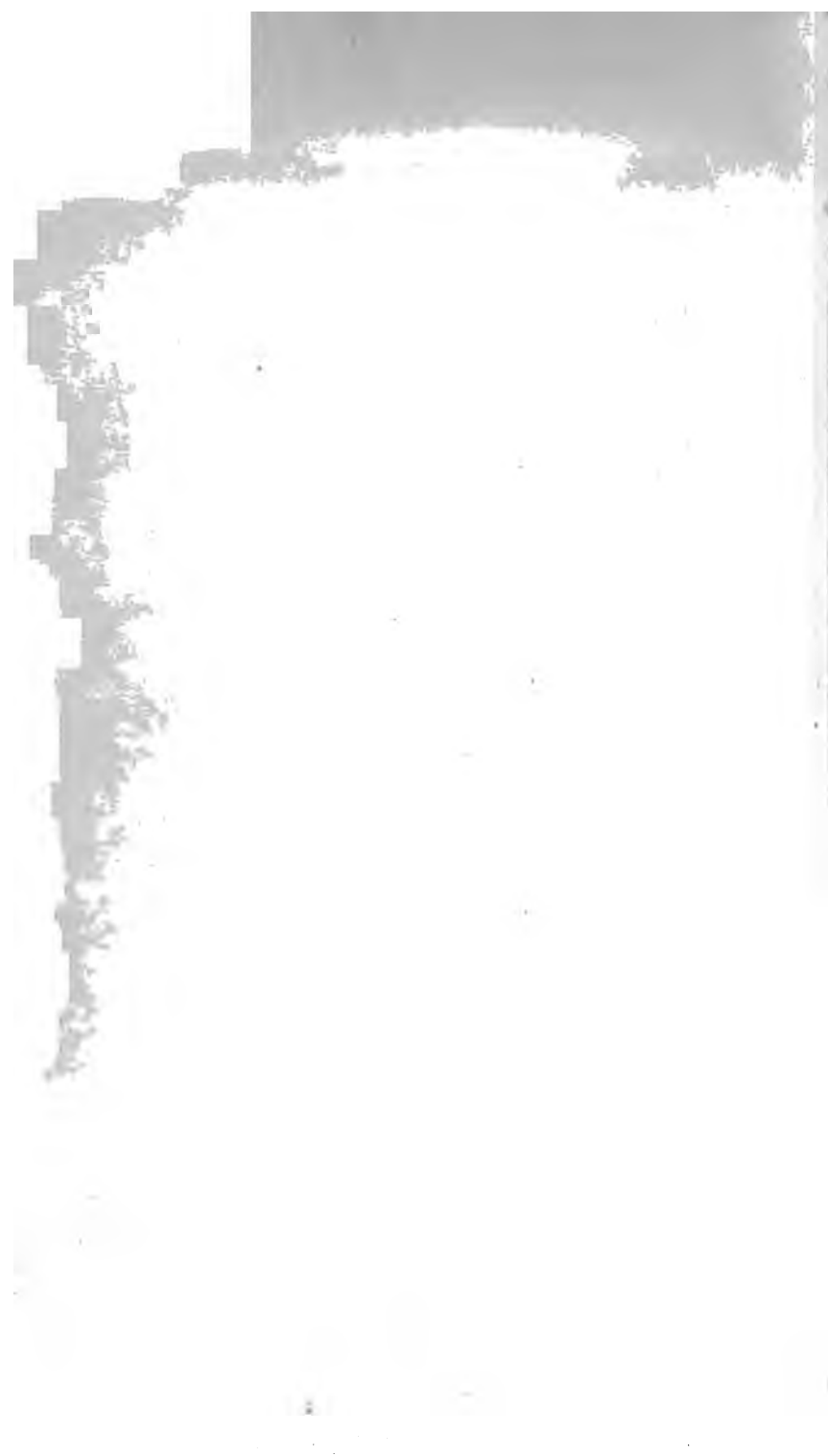
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OBSERVATIONS
ON
THE STATE OF IRELAND,
Principally directed to its
AGRICULTURE
AND
RURAL POPULATION;

IN
A SERIES OF LETTERS,
WRITTEN ON A TOUR THROUGH THAT COUNTRY.

BY J. C. CURWEN, Esq. M.P.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

—◆—
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—◆—

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LETTERS

ON

IRELAND.

LETTER XXXV.

Cork, Sept. 14, 1813.

THE appointed hour for the march of the military terminated the slumbers of the good folks at Macroom. We started very soon after three.

The country presented a delightful change both in soil and cultivation—a great inequality of surface—the fences good, and the enclosures large. The very summits of the hills were under the dominion of the plough; a trifling quantity of grain remained uncut, and corroborated the abundance of this year's crop, which was further evinced by the appearance of the stubbles.

The wild and barren scenery of Kerry is agreeably contrasted by the enclosures—the

2 *Different Estimation of the Acre.*

cultivation and improvements in the county of Cork. As the distance between Macroom and Cork is twenty miles, and the intercourse very considerable, it is singular there should be no intermediate place where a feed of oats could be obtained. In passing the military (the Queen's County Militia) it seemed to be doubtful, whether the women and children did not form a corps as numerous as the regiment.

The perplexity arising from the use of different measures is not unknown, or uncomplained of, in this country. The land is let under three distinct estimations of the acre: in the north it is governed by the Cunningham—in the midland, the plantation—and in this part of the south of Ireland, by the statute acre. Near Macroom the rents are from twenty to sixty shillings the acre. The predilection for the plough is universal, and white crops succeed each other as long as the land will produce them: when these fail, they have recourse to grass, which rises luxuriantly without cultivation; and what is unaccountable, exhausted as the soil by this conduct must be considered, the grass is not less nutritious than abundant. As far as I was enabled to judge, in spite of this barbarous treatment, deterioration from repeated cropping does not follow as a consequence here, except on strong

clays. The adhesiveness of the soil, which generally succeeds constant ploughing, and impedes vegetation, by preventing absorption and evaporation, does not seem to occur in Ireland. This circumstance has been a frequent subject of speculation and conjecture. I do not think the causes assigned by Sir Humphry Davy for the superior fertility of Ireland are at all satisfactory. Those demi-tints which in England distinguish lands that are exhausted are here almost unknown—the verdure is everlasting and luxuriant, arising, I should suppose, from some inherent quality in the soil, which keeps it in a proper state to admit the operation of the salutary influences of the atmosphere.

The valley in which we travelled from Macroom is of a fertile description, but very narrow; in some parts it is ornamented with a number of gentlemen's seats, and appeared to be romantic. A considerable improvement in point of comfort appeared in the cottiers' cabins, which gave us infinite pleasure. We observed the remains of several castles, resembling those on our own borders, most of which were built in the concluding part of Queen Elizabeth's reign, a period of great national distress to Ireland. Many parts of her general policy are entitled to respect, but all that related to Ireland was op-

4 *Beautiful Banks of the Lee.*

pressive, and calculated to produce and perpetuate the very evils her measures were intended to remove.

Bally Colleck, six miles from Cork, is a great ordnance depot, where immense sums have been expended in erections possessing much show and extent. Considerable lime-works are carried on in this neighbourhood. We had a delightful drive from Bally Colleck: the banks of the Lee are highly beautiful—embellished with numerous residences; and the opposite side presented a great diversity of charming objects. Two miles from Cork, we stopped at a farm for the purpose of inspecting as foul a piece of stubble as I ever beheld, which the farmer was then sowing down with hay seeds; and being extremely proud of his own performance, was not a little astonished at my want of perception in not complimenting his husbandry. In the vicinity of Cork lands let so extravagantly, I was led to expect better practices; for, in its immediate neighbourhood, no less than ten pounds an acre are paid; but at a little distance the same quality of land may be had at less than half that money.

The last mile of the road, through the Irish Town, is so execrably bad as to render it dan-

gerous for a carriage: it is a disgrace to this noble city that such a nuisance should be suffered.

Nearly opposite to the old barracks we were met by a prodigious crowd, occupying the whole breadth of the street, advancing with a hasty step and a most hideous howl. The door ways and windows were filled with the inhabitants of both sexes, and of all ages; who appeared to be much interested and entertained at what was going on. To us this was a profound secret, until we discovered it to be nothing less than a funeral. Cork, we understand, is greatly celebrated for its woeful performances on these solemn occasions, which are requited according to the affluence or abilities of the parties. The body was placed on a two-wheel hearse, with a cover over it, which did not permit a full view of the coffin. The corpse was followed by the yelling performers, after whom came the friends and attendants of the deceased. The howl surpassed, in its combination of discords, all description—the funeral dirge was recited with so much rapidity and violence, as to convey the idea of anger and fury, rather than lamentation. The cry so frightened our horses as to make them ungovernable; and had not the civility or prudence of the performers induced a rest, we

could hardly have escaped from accident. The pause afforded an opportunity to observe the vocal assistants as they passed. The band was principally composed of women, to whose personal qualifications time had done irreparable injury, of whom the first in vociferation was, apparently, more indebted to her habits than natural complexion for the ruddiness which marked her countenance. Her associates had also evidently fortified their hearts with whisky against all compunctions of sorrow, beyond those external tokens for which they are usually recompensed. In short, the solemnity of the occasion was so totally lost sight of, as not to preclude the coarsest jokes. The performers and the spectators seemed equally amused, and equally indifferent; and if, during this "mockery of woe," there were any individuals present who entertained affection, or even a friendly regard, for the deceased, they were greatly entitled to pity. I could not have credited the continuance of so barbarous a custom, had I not been a witness of the mummeries, which, to have made it completely ludicrous, wanted nothing but the fool's cap and bells. Spincer in his "View of Ireland," says, "There are other sorts of cries also used by the Irish, which savour greatly of Scythian barbarisme, as their lamentations on their buryals, with despairful outcries

and immoderate wailings. The whole, Martin Stanihurst might also have used for an argument to prove them Egyptians; for so in Scripture, it is mentioned that the Egyptians lamented for the death of Joseph. Others think this custom to have come from the Spaniards, for they doe imminsorably likewise bewayle their dead. But the same is not proper Spanish, but heathenish, brought thither first, either by the Scythians or the Moors, that are Africans, and long possessed the country. For it is the manner of all pagans and infidels to be intemperate in their bewaylings of their dead, for that they had no further hope of salvation. And this ill custome also is specially noted by Diodorus Siculus to have been in the Scythians, as is yet amongst the northern Scots at this day, as you may read in their chronicles."

The situation of Cork is particularly striking. The old town, being built on the side of a hill, forms an amphitheatre, at the foot of which the river Lee formerly ran. In the process of time the course of the river changed, and its breadth has been confined, by which means a considerable space of flat ground has been gained, and on which the more modern part of the town is built. Some of the principal streets were intersected with canals capable of admitting vessels

of a small draft of water; these within a few years have been filled up, and quays made below. The esplanade, and street adjoining to it, are spacious, well-built, and very handsome; all the other streets are narrow, and the houses high. The old town occupies the southern bank; the new is built on the northern. The steepness of the streets is attended with great inconvenience, which is scarcely compensated by the beautiful prospect the houses command. The barracks are on the summit of the hill, and capable of accommodating a great number of troops. Few towns within limits so circumscribed contain so great a population. Formerly the ground floors of the best houses in the principal streets were let for shops: instances of this may still be found, but the practice has ceased to be general. The market houses are very spacious—well regulated, and kept extremely clean. These arrangements do great credit to the internal police of the city. A magnificent coffee-room, for the general assemblage of the merchants, is just completed, and does honour to their taste and public spirit.

The Institution here, which comprises all branches of science, promises to be of great public utility. Government allows two thousand five hundred pounds per annum: and

above one thousand pounds are raised by subscription towards defraying the expenses of the establishment; which the secretary, Mr. Hicks, has already put on a highly respectable footing, and where most particular attention is paid to agriculture, botany, and mineralogy.

Among the objects of the greatest interest in this place is the brewery of Messrs. Crawford and Bemishe. The quantity brewed by these gentlemen is little inferior to that of the first London houses; in one respect this house is superior—that of preparing and manufacturing their own malt. This establishment produces porter of high repute, and gives employment to nearly five hundred persons.

The quays do not correspond with the opulence and importance of the place; nor did I see those improvements carrying on which in other places we have noticed with so much pleasure. The slaughtering trade is a principal branch of the commerce of this place; above one hundred thousand beasts, besides pigs innumerable, are here annually slaughtered. Waterford, however, has materially interfered with Cork in the killing of swine. I was greatly pleased with the display of opulence in the environs of Cork: the residences of all the first

merchants are out of the city, where their establishments are on a scale of great magnificence. We had the pleasure of dining at Mr. Crawford's seat, about four miles from Cork, on the south side of the Lee, whence the prospects are delightful!

Agriculture, it seems, has made greater progress in this county than in any other in Ireland. I wish it had been possible for us to have visited some of the most spirited improvers. There are very large dairy farms in this neighbourhood; milk in the city is sold at three-pence the quart.

Morrison, speaking of Cork, says "Touching the Irish diet, some lords and knights, and gentlemen of the English-Irish, and all the English there abiding having competent means, use the English diet, but some more, some less cleanly, few or none curiously, and no doubt they have as great, and for their part greater plenty, than the English, of flesh, fowle, fish, and all things for food, if they will use like art of cookery—always I except fruits, venison, and some dainties proper to England, and some in Ireland; because they neither so generally affect dainty food, nor so diligently search it as the English do. Many of the English-Irish

have little and little been infected with Irish filthiness, and that in the very cities, excepting Dublin, and some of the better sort in Waterford, where the English continually lodging in their houses use the English diet. The English-Irish, after our manner, serve to their dinners joints of flesh cut to our fashion, with geese, pullets, pigs, and the like roasted meats. But their ordinary food for the common sort is of white meats; and they eat cakes of oates for bread, and drinke beer made of malt and hops."

There is a nunnery here of some extent, and of consequence sufficient to entitle it to the notice of strangers. The river Lee to the Cove of Cork is highly interesting—the scenery rich and picturesque. We lamented the unfavourable state of the weather, as it prevented us from any further survey of its banks.

Party animosities here are carried to a great height—private comfort and public prosperity are always sacrificed to these unfortunate local misunderstandings, which are greatly promoted by the mutual desire that each party fosters to avoid personal conferences with each other, and to prefer the insinuations and misrepresentations of interested, invidious characters.

12 *Unalienable Interests of both Countries*

I could not suppress the indignation I felt as an Englishman, at the triumphant air with which some of the daily prints of the city sought to extol an advantage supposed to have been gained over the allies by Buonaparte. I can truly feel, and dispassionately allow, great latitude to the Irish for their past sufferings and present complaints ; but insanity alone can justify the conduct of any one in looking to France for a redress of wrongs. Fatal indeed has proved her alliance to every state which has sought to better its condition through her influence or mediation.

The interests of Great Britain and Ireland, however misapprehended, have been—are—and, under honest administrations, must always be—the same. Their contiguity renders their union as necessary as a mutual friendship is requisite for their protection and prosperity. Every wound which false policy has inflicted on Ireland has proved a gangrene in the side of Great Britain. On reference to Leland's History of Ireland, the manner in which the ministers of Queen Elizabeth thought proper to express themselves, with respect to this devoted country, is not less entitled to the contempt than the execration of minds governed, in the

present day, by a sound and liberal policy. "Should we exert ourselves in reducing Ireland to order and civility, it soon must acquire power, consequence, and riches—the inhabitants will thus be alienated from England—they will cast themselves into the arms of some foreign power, or perhaps erect themselves into a separate and independent state. Let us rather connive at their disorders; for a weak and disordered people never can detach themselves from the crown of England."

Happy am I to perceive a more correct estimate is now formed of our relative and mutual interests, and thence to indulge in the hope that nothing can operate to defeat a redress of all national vexations but that which is so capable of being corrected—a want of temper and prudence on the part of the political leaders.

Much as I wish success to every measure of liberal concession and toleration, I should be most hostile to the disjunction of the two countries. A combination of minds and interests on the homely principle of "fair dealing" is indispensable for the peace, happiness, and prosperity of both; and I have no hesitation to pronounce, that those who would deny to Ireland a complete redress of her grievances, and a

full participation in every national advantage, are as much mistaken in the true and real interests of the empire, as those who would injudiciously become the promoters of inconsiderate measures with a view to any infraction of the union. I have only time to lament that we have so little to spare where so much is demanded, and to say I am ever yours,

J. C. C.

LETTER XXXVI.

Fermoy, Sept. 14, 1813.

WE quitted Cork with great regret, as the view which we had taken of the many interesting objects, both within the city and its immediate neighbourhood, was too superficial to be satisfactory.

Our road hither for five miles was by the side of the Lee, which forms, at high water, a noble river. The ground rises beautifully from each side of its banks, and displays to great advantage the crowded villas with which it is ornamented; while the numerous shipping, passing and re-passing, adds greatly to the interest of the scene.

Since the union, the shipping of Ireland has been greatly augmented, but is not yet in proportion to its commerce. As capital may be acquired, ship-building may become an object of greater attention. It may indeed be objected, that Ireland is almost destitute of ship

timber ; its vicinity to Wales may, however, to a certain extent, supply this deficiency.

The distance from Cork to Fermoy is fifteen miles. After quitting the banks of the Lee, we found the country hilly, and the soil of a strong adhesive nature. We observed with pleasure some few attempts at raising green crops ; and near the residence of several gentlemen were specimens of tolerable husbandry. The use of lime as a manure seemed to be very general. From the grain still uncut, we did not think very favourably of the fertility of the soil, which, on our arrival within a few miles of this place, changed, and had a light, dry appearance.

Fermoy is an object of no common interest, as it affords an instance of what improvements may be accomplished, even by the spirit, intelligence, and perseverance, of a single individual. Previous to the sale of the estate by Lord Barrymore, Fermoy was a poor contemptible place ; and so it might have continued, had it not fortunately changed hands ; for though it has no local advantages for trade, its situation on the banks of the Black Water is very inviting and beautiful.

The exorbitant demand for ground on which

to build barracks at Cork, suspended the plans proposed there by government, and afforded Mr. Anderson an opportunity to make offer of a situation at Fermoy for this purpose; and in the mean time, to erect temporary barracks at his own expense. These propositions were accepted, and the event has fully answered Mr. Anderson's expectations. A town has arisen as if by magic—the streets spacious, the plan regular—houses neat, and the whole being white-washed gives it an air of great cleanliness and life. The barracks are erected on an eminence, on the north side of the Black Water, and are calculated to contain a great force. Here are also an extensive brewery—a manufactory for carriages and agricultural implements—woollen and paper mills. Nor is Fermoy without its bank. Mr. Anderson, in becoming a party in all undertakings, gives such support, animation, and confidence to the whole, that it is impossible to remain indifferent to whatever relates individually to a gentleman who has been so eminently useful to his country. Mr. Anderson is a native of Dumfries; about forty years ago, he settled at Cork with a small fortune, which his ability and industry greatly improved. His activity and punctuality recommended him on all occasions, while his integrity procured him the confidence of all with whom he had any trans-

actions. When government decided on the establishment of mail coaches, many difficulties and obstacles arose, and it was apprehended no one would be found bold enough to embark, in what was then considered a dangerous enterprise. Mr. Anderson proffered his services; his established character inspired confidence; every difficulty was overcome; and the most important benefits have resulted from his labors, by the facility with which communication is now extended to every part of Ireland. The accomplishment of such valuable undertakings by one individual is an important practical lesson to the country. Contrast the situation and the means of an Anderson, with the magnificent stations and opulence of the land-owners, and then say, what might not a few such characters effect for the general prosperity of Ireland? Was but a small portion of that spirit, which some great proprietors display in the extension of their parliamentary influence, directed to objects for the substantial and permanent improvement of their estates, and the melioration of the present wretched condition of the tenantry on them; the sum of individual happiness and national prosperity, resulting from so happy a revolution, would be incalculable.

Mr. Anderson's residence is on the north

bank of the Black Water ; his house is a handsome modern building, but too much exposed for the comfort of the proprietor.

Among the public buildings at Fermoy is a very beautiful church. The ground rents in the town are higher than in almost any in England. Six pence the square yard, or at the rate of one hundred and twenty-one pounds per statute acre. At Leith indeed, a small site near the docks was sold at a rate exceeding forty thousand pound per acre ! A ground rent of five pounds a year is paid on a very moderate house, letting at about forty pounds per annum. A summer's grazing for a 'cow costs four pounds. Coals are two shillings a barrel dearer here than at Cork, which must give a decided preference to the establishment of manufactories at that place. A question may arise how such rents are to be paid in future, when there may be less occasion for the present military establishments, on which the greater portion of the business here depends.

Fermoy is a forcible example of what may be accomplished by the genius, resolution, and perseverance of one man. Whether the establishment may be able to support itself on a future

day, when deprived of the abilities of the original projector—time alone can determine.

One of the last, but not least interesting objects at Fermoy, is the Lancastrian school. The number of children taught is very considerable. We were unfortunate in making our visit while the scholars were at their breakfast, which deprived us of the pleasure of ascertaining their proficiency.

It is impossible to contemplate the means every where resorted to for the expansion of the infant mind, and not anticipate great extension of human happiness; no longer need the ploughman “ whistle for want of thought,” or fly to excess as a relief from the irksomeness of leisure.

You will be surprised to learn that something not unlike universal suffrage prevails in very many parts of this country. The power of creating freeholders is almost unlimited. It is done by deed—for qualification there is none: so that the right to vote is unconnected with property further than the individual's cabin residence, which is all that is required. But so far are these wretched individuals from receiving

benefit from their inapposite distinction of freeholders, or consideration for their votes, that it operates a contrary way, and puts them to expense and loss of time, without the privilege of having any choice: ruin would inevitably overtake him, who should dare to presume to have any opinion but that dictated to him by his landlord; and the candidate who should solicit, or accept without solicitation, the vote of a tenant against the will of his landlord, must answer the irregularity with his life, and incur the general odium of his own class in society. Popular opinion has little or no influence in the election of the one hundred Irish members. Election contests with us procure, for a time, some consideration for the lower ranks—what dignifies the English character, debases the Irish. The magnitude of the evil is greater than can be conceived by those who have not had an opportunity of witnessing its effects. In the most venal places in England, besides the bribe, some condescension is expected; here the poor voter is only degraded by an additional link to the chain of his dependency. The representation of the town rests mostly in each body corporate, which seldom exceeds twelve members. The selecting for representation by the extent of the population was a farce, in which the people had no assigned part to act. The demo-

cratic part of the British constitution, *quoad* the Irish, had better not exist. What a contrast does the election of the twenty-eight peers returned to parliament for Scotland exhibit? These may truly boast of being chosen by two hundred and seven of the most enlightened and independent electors that ever exercised the function of voters! Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER XXXVII.

Lismore, Sept. 15, 1813.

THE happiness or misery of any community can never be viewed with indifference. The most superficial observer rejoices or sympathizes in the exterior appearances which are presented to his consideration. Happily possessed is that wealth, which has been obtained by promoting and extending the felicity of our fellow creatures—if it create envy in the bosoms of a few, it is secure of the respect and approbation which good men are ever ready to concede.

The activity and bustle that pervade Fermoy indicate its inhabitants to be in possession of at least a fair share of the comforts of life. Their personal appearance, and the respectability of their habitations, confirm the persuasion. The town is well situated; and when it is considered, as it really is, the creation of a single individual, in the short space of a few years, it produces not less admiration, than a desire that it should be attentively regarded by the great

24 *Beautiful Banks of the Black Water.*

landed proprietors in Ireland, as an example worthy of imitation, and of what is capable of being done towards an augmentation of national consequence, and the comforts to which the lower orders of the people are so justly entitled. Contrasting the state of their idle, wretched tenantry, with that of the industrious and respectable inhabitants of Fermoy, could not fail of awakening their attention, not only to their own individual interest, but to the general welfare of the community.

Mr. M'Cassel, whose residence is near Fermoy, has the reputation of being a good farmer. Lord Riversdale has made great improvements at Rathcormack, and has extensively adopted the system of green crops. We did not observe a single field of clover in the course of the fifteen miles between Cork and Fermoy—the cultivation of the potatoes was all in lazy beds.

The banks of the Black Water are very beautiful: the southern side, on which we travelled from Fermoy, is flat, the northern bold; both crowded with cottages. The hedges are formed principally of white-thorn, and thickly planted with timber. We were gratified with the appearance of much wood in various parts of our

drive to Lismore. In the husbandry, there was nothing worthy of notice—the crops appeared to be light, and the harvest late. We observed some lands under the preparation of fallowing for wheat; a practice which had not occurred to us for a length of time. In this neighbourhood were seen many gentlemen's seats, and the cabins had the appearance of some interior comfort. The manner in which farming is conducted may generally be ascertained by the implements employed; the Scotch carts, made at Fermoy, are too large and heavy for the common horses of the country; a smaller kind of cart, adopted in Cumberland, would answer better here, and be more likely to come into general use with the small farmers: I prevailed on the Secretary of the Cork Institution to permit my ordering one to be sent to the Society, under an impression that, if the cost be admissible, it may remove the principal objection, as to the weight of the Scotch cart. The price of labor, when individuals are so fortunate as to have constant employment, is under a shilling a day. The want of inland navigation makes fuel dear. This must operate greatly, as I before observed, against the successful result of manufactories at Fermoy.

As we approached Lismore, we found the fields well laid out, and the hedges particularly fine. The pleasure thus called forth was not of long continuance: on our arrival here the town presented a scene of wretchedness and misery, which was distressing to behold—even in Ireland, where such appearances of poverty too often occur. What a contrast did this place present to that which we had just left?

It was impossible to survey the dirty and dilapidated buildings, without sympathizing in the general suffering. Fuel is scarce and dear; the turf is brought from a considerable distance, and appears to be of an inferior quality.

To behold a large community bowed down in hopeless indigence, cannot fail to inspire feelings of a most painful nature, in those who are but transitory visitors! What must be the effect of such a depression of character, on the proprietor of the soil? especially one in the possession of extensive estates in England, accustomed to survey the comforts there, so widely diffused among his dependants. Report says, the Duke of Devonshire purposes to rebuild the Castle of Lismore, and restore it to its ancient grandeur. Situated on a lofty rock

overhanging the Black Water, whose opposite bank is bold and well clothed with wood, with a beautiful and rich valley beneath, extending to Coppoquin, it possesses in its locale, all that is necessary to form a princely residence: to make it really so, a revolution must be effected in the condition of the surrounding inhabitants; or joyless will be the abode, where the eye may not venture to look beyond the limits of the palace, lest it encounter the misery of the surrounding people. A castle, as at present, in ruins, comports with a town in a state of decay. Restore the palace only, and the wretchedness of the place will be increased by the contrast. I sincerely wish the noble personage may continue his predilection for this spot, as the probable consequences would be the adoption of measures that would stimulate to industrious pursuits all classes in its neighbourhood. The proudest distinction of nobility is the inclination and ability to augment the sum of human happiness—in the case before us, a prospective return of increased revenue, as well as the present indulgence of our finest feelings, proclaim the wisdom and humanity of the undertaking. The castle and its immense appendent domains are not the objects here most to be envied—the power of converting idleness and indigence into activity and independence, cannot be sug-

gested to the mind without enviable expectations. Although the progress of improvements, generally speaking, is slow, yet means of accomplishing, at once, what under ordinary circumstances would require the duration of a long life to effect, sometimes occur. All the leases on this part of the Duke of Devonshire's property are now about to expire. When this circumstance is taken into consideration, with the time of life at which his Grace has succeeded to the honours and patrimonial estates of his family, what an opportunity offers itself for patriotic improvement, and giving an example for the imitation of others. Here might practices easily be established, which would have the effect of a school for teaching a better system of husbandry, and the management of all rural affairs. Hence might conviction be so forced on the incredulous, and diffused among the laborious orders, that no doubt would remain of their comfort becoming increased in the ratio of their exertions, and their happiness secured in proportion to the confidence they reposed in their employers, and their obedience and respect for the laws of the land. The Irish car, and the long handled shovel, would soon give place to the Cumberland cart, and garden spade, whilst every other approved implement, and species of management, by being

there successfully brought into use, would rapidly be adopted throughout the country. To put the liberality of the project out of all doubt, a manufactory for such purposes on the spot would be a national benefit; where the industrious but indigent laborer might be supplied, at half-price, with the best adapted tool for the work on which he might be employed. The sacrifice of one thousand pounds by the landlord would soon save such a sum to each farmer as would repay any advance of rent, with which the lands in the neighbourhood of such distinguished and valuable improvements might be fairly charged. The labor of a horse would thus soon be saved on a moderate sized farm, the expense of which cannot be stated at less than fifteen pounds per annum—the substitution of the spade for the shovel would double the work of each individual, and lead the way to an advance of wages, and augmentation of comfort to the lower classes. Should it be objected, that, in a country where work is scarce, this improved mode would have the effect of throwing more individuals than at present out of employ—I beg leave to reply, that the increased demand of manual labor, consequent on the introduction of every species of improvement, would be greater than could be met by the facilities afforded in the use of the

most appropriate tools. The importance of these objects is great, whether considered in a national or individual point of light, and not unworthy the serious attention of those in the most exalted stations. Would it not be a prouder distinction to have introduced the Scottish cart, and English spade, to the industrious husbandmen of an extensive district, than, by the ingenuity and agency of others, to have erected the finest Gothic structure in the empire? Deserved praise for the introduction of implements, to facilitate manual labor, would exclusively belong to the proprietor; while the merits of the edifice would rest with the architect, and the admiration it creates lead on all occasions to the common inquiry—"Who gave the plan?" Objects of substantial utility are those which are most entitled to the commendations of mankind. Little minds are captivated by exhibitions—great ones by those actions which deserve the approbation of the wise, and the applause of the virtuous.

Although agriculture is entitled to a precedence in the employment of man, and ought to be the first consideration in every well-regulated state; yet I am now convinced, that it cannot be carried to its utmost profitable extent, without the support of manufactories and com-

merce ; of the importance of which to the husbandry of every country, I was not so fully aware until I visited Ireland. The inhabitants of rich countries can alone afford to bring into cultivation poor ground. It is here the profits of the manufacturer would not only create a new market, and a further demand, but enable him to pay a higher price for the produce of the soil, than the cultivator can afford : and as the labor of a man has been found, on all ordinary occasions, equal to provide for his own wants, and those of his family ; after every allowance which can possibly be made, there would remain in society, were it exclusively confined to agriculture, a great surplus population, the members of which would become a dead weight on the productive labor of the community, if manufactories in its neighbourhood did not afford them employment.

The present unfortunate situation of Ireland has proved to me, that cheap food is not the blessing which, by many, may be imagined : the greatest political alteration that could take place in this distressed country would be a dislike to potatoes, and a general preference in the rising generation to bread and animal food. I have formerly been an advocate for an extended growth and use of the potatoe, but have re-

32 *Excessively cheap Food not desirable.*

cently had cause to alter my opinion; and must now earnestly deprecate their becoming the staple article of food for the lower classes in Great Britain, lest similar results to those which I witness in this country should follow. As a security against famine, the potatoe is invaluable; but as a mean for supporting the existence of man, without that exertion he ought daily to make for the preservation of his health and faculties, it is certainly not desirable.

Food having been demonstrated by Mr. Malthus to be the only limit to population; a country where the inhabitants would be content to live wholly on this root might support numbers of people beyond any calculation: *e. g.* Fifteen Irish are maintained by the produce of the same extent of land required for the support of one English manufacturer; and, were the most improved modes of cultivating this vegetable resorted to by the cottiers, the disproportion would still be greater. A population thus produced seems to exceed all capital, and means of occupation at home.

As the happiness of those individuals who are not compelled to labor for their subsistence depends on pursuit—so with those who are obliged to labor in order that they may live, it

depends on employment. This is the first occasion which I have had of witnessing the absence of profitable employment among a redundant population, and I have no hesitation in declaring it, as my humble opinion, to be one of the great sources whence spring the miseries of Ireland.

Unquestionably, much relief may be afforded; but while the population proceeds as it does at present, unsupported by profitable labor, there seems no possibility of any remedy short of a radical reform, and that beginning in the higher orders, and gradually descending to the most subordinate classes.

The desirable alteration, if it could be effected, is that which would call the people into constant active employment, and make them sharers in those reasonable comforts of life, to which, as rational beings, they are so justly entitled. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Dungarvon, Sept. 15, 1819.

CAN you imagine a more piteous case than that of a poor exhausted traveller, who, after passing a whole day without refreshment, arrives at a town with a fine sounding name; which sent two members to the Irish parliament, and yet actually affording nothing on which the demands of hunger and thirst could be satisfied; but indifferent bread and worse tea—nor was this all: Sancho Pança observes, “Blessed be the man who first invented sleep!” The filthy appearance of the beds precluded even this comfort. It seems strange that the political contests which have taken place in this borough should not have produced a better inn and accommodations.

I shall endeavour to banish the recollection of these momentary vexations, by making you, as far as I am able, a partaker of the pleasure, which the enchanting country through which we passed from Lismore afforded us. We were tempted to walk as far as Cappoquin, that we might at more leisure enjoy the scenery, which

the beauty of the banks of the Black Water presented.

From the bridge at Lismore, which is a noble edifice, a very fine view of the castle is obtained; exhibiting the whole base of the majestic rock on which it is erected. The valley on the south side of the river, though confined, is extremely luxuriant. The hills rise boldly on the northern bank, and are covered with wood to Cappoquin, a distance of four miles. About a mile from the town, the orchards commence, and it is here the best Irish cider is made. There are several handsome seats of gentlemen, ornamented with timber, on the way to Cappoquin, the scenery of which is very picturesque.

Cappoquin is a neat small town, situated also on the Black Water, where the current of the river alters its course from the west to the south. It is navigable for small craft from Youghall, and hence by means of a canal to Lismore. The Black Water at Youghall is reported to be a very beautiful stream, to which we can easily give credit from its appearance, on our drive from Fermoy.

On quitting Cappoquin by the Dungarvon

road, we were highly pleased with the good order and neatness of a few fields, which could not have been better managed. We understood they belonged to Captain Barnes, whose credit as a farmer would be deservedly great in any country.

Nothing can exceed the beauty and richness of the vale from Cappoquin to Dungarvon ; the soil is admirable, and the crops of grain very weighty. The breadth of the valley is from three to four miles, bounded on both sides by ranges of hills which are well enclosed, and cultivated to their summits ; indeed the whole of this part of the country is well wooded. From Cappoquin, through the vale, is nine miles, and it is difficult to imagine any thing more delightful than the whole of this distance. As the sun set, his golden tints spread over the fields of harvest, and diffused a richness on every feature of the landscape. It was with much regret we perceived the night drawing on, as we could willingly have employed a few additional hours in contemplating the luxuriance of the scene.

There appeared to be much lime used in this district ; we saw lime-kilns in all directions, and the lime-stone rock, frequently bursting out

from the surface. Nature has here done much—man little—towards rendering this valley one of the most charming districts in Ireland. The cabins however are very wretched, very few acres under fallow, and no appearance of green crops. It was quite dark before we reached Dungarvon, when, to our dismay, we found the flowing tide very high, the bridge broken down, and the ferry-boat so ill calculated for the conveyance of horses, that, miserable as was the hovel on that side of the water, we preferred leaving them, to the risk of their being lamed in the dark. We ferried over to Dungarvon, under no doubt of finding tolerable accommodations.—But—we do not complain without reason—nor claim pity for trifles which happily a few hours will terminate!

Thirty thousand pounds are said to have been expended by the late Duke of Devonshire in attempting to rebuild the bridge, and when on the eve of completion, the foundation gave way. The work is still proceeding, and, if ever finished, it will be a great benefit to the place. The contests in the borough have been very expensive; the interest at present is not in the Devonshire family.

The Nymph bank, lying off the shore, renders

the situation of Dungarvon eligible for fishing; a number of small craft are employed in the transport of fish and potatoes to Dublin. The harbour is said to be difficult of approach; but when vessels are in it, the bason appears safe and commodious.

The town is small, and the streets narrow.— It is likely I may not have a better opportunity of giving you the result of my observations on the general state of the tenantry of the country.

The size of farms from fifteen to thirty acres would give an average of about twenty-two or twenty-three acres to each. Portions of these are again sublet to cottiers, whose rents are paid by labor done for the tenants; from whom they sometimes receive milk and some other necessities. These running accounts are an endless source of dissatisfaction, of dispute, and of contention at the quarter sessions. In some of the most populous parts of Ireland, there is supposed to be an inhabitant for every acre, while the cultivation of the soil, as now practised, does not afford employment for a third of that population. In the north, where the linen trade has been established, the lower classes are weavers, which gives them a great superiority over the southern districts. The labor on the

highways and great roads, for which such large assessments are made on the counties, afford, for a portion of the year, a great source of employment.

If the Irish have not the laborious habits of the English, it ought rather to be considered a misfortune, than to be imputed to them as blame. Industry is an acquirement of early life, and becomes strengthened and habitual by years. In a country where there is little demand and no encouragement for industrious exertions, it cannot be surprising that this habit is not acquired. The women also, having no vocation but that of attending to their families, are equally indolent, and thus the offspring of such parents are nursed in sloth and nurtured in idleness.

The minute subdivision of lands among the occupants is attended with many serious evils. The rents of these small sublet parcels become so high to the actual cultivators, as to preclude all profitable returns from their labour. It affords "too great a facility to marriage." The population becomes increased beyond the capital of the country employed in husbandry, and the supernumerary individuals are compelled to subsist on the produce of others' labor, to

which they have no power of contributing. The aggregate number of horses is greater than would be required, if the estates were distributed into moderately-sized farms; whilst the want of farming buildings, beside other disadvantages, prevents the accumulation of manure.

The laborers, with few exceptions, are all married. The farmers have no hired servants, of either sex, residing in their dwellings; this is another serious evil arising out of small farms. Ireland, which in extent is nearly equal to one-half of Great Britain, does not probably employ one-tenth of the agricultural servants.

The buildings on every farm, being erected at the expense of the tenant, are necessarily on the most limited scale, seldom more than a cabin, and this insufficient for the shelter of the family beyond their earliest days. As the children grow up, they are compelled to seek another establishment for themselves, and to hazard every consequence that may ensue. Alternative they have none. Such is the ruinous effects of small tenements, as far as they regard the individual occupiers. The interests of all parties suffer, and it would be for the advantage of the whole community to promote

a radical reform of the present disreputable system. But how this is to be effected, as I have before observed, is the question?

To the proprietors of lands under long leases no temptation for any change can be offered. An increased rent could not be had on the consolidation of several small farms, while the expenditure in buildings, even if that could be insured, would be inconveniently borne, and would be fatal to any idea of such an alteration.

The superior freshness and fertility of the soil enables the husbandmen in Ireland to obtain crops, with perhaps one-third of the manure which is required in Great Britain; were this not the case, the country must long ago have been excessively deteriorated. The richness of the surface resists all the efforts of man to sterilize it; for, however just may be the censure of want of exertion on other occasions, I must give the Irish credit for being very persevering in their endeavours for this purpose.

When a farm becomes vacant, the smallness of the capital required for its occupation contributes to the competition for it, and enhances the rent beyond all prudent calculation. The high prices of grain, with the privations to

which the farming community restrict themselves, have enabled them, though not without difficulty, to pay their extravagant rents; but I cannot, without the most painful sensations, anticipate the consequences which must attend these poor creatures on corn falling to a fair level price; and, as this may reasonably be expected, the distress in every part of Ireland will then be inconceivable.

Happy would it be if the landed proprietors could be persuaded of the numerous evils which arise out of this minute subdivision of land. A view of the present misery, and the sad assurance of its daily increase, damps the pleasurable prospects, which otherwise would be afforded from a survey of the inexhaustible fertility of this glorious country. The spirit of agricultural improvement which, in converting barren wastes to fruitful districts, has so largely benefited the empire, can operate but partially in favor of Ireland. The whole system is radically wrong; the hope of its change for the better, remote. A failure in the potatoe crop, which Heaven avert! would nearly absorb the whole resources of the country to subsist its population; which, at the best of times, is burthenisome, but by such a casualty may become destructive.

Tithes also are a grievous tax on the small farmer, two-thirds of whose lands are generally under grain. In a farm of four hundred acres, about one hundred and fifty may be supposed liable to corn tithes; in small farms, the aggregate number of acres of which being the same, two hundred and sixty, or probably more, would be found subject to the like claim.

It is quite melancholy to dilate on such a system, but more so to witness its operations, without being able to suggest any practical means for alleviating the misery of so many millions of our fellow creatures. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER XXXIX.

Waterford, Sept. 16, 1813.

WE were ready with the first dawn of day to quit Dungarvon, where neither rest nor refreshment was to be obtained. Though not much disposed to be in humour with the town, the harbour had claims on our attention. It is very spacious, and apparently very convenient for trade. Land near the borough lets for five pounds, that in the vale for three pounds per acre. The tithes of some of the parishes through which we passed were divided between ecclesiastic and lay impropiators.

At the distance of about five miles from Dungarvon we left the vale, and ascended a ridge of hills of considerable height, which we crossed. The whole country, through which our road lay for above twenty miles, was hilly; the soil but indifferent, and the cultivation of it worse. The population is not so redundant, yet the cottages are as poor as in most parts of Ireland. We stopped to breakfast at a half-way

house, a small inn, where the landlord was considered a great farmer, occupying above one hundred acres, at a rent of forty shillings per acre; twelve shillings per acre is the tithe composition for wheat and potatoes; nine for barley and meadow, and six for oats. No fences, except with mounds, are here to be seen, and scarcely a tree. When within a mile of Waterford the land improves; near the city are a number of good houses, bespeaking the wealth and consequence of the place we were approaching. King William is reported to have said, when he first got sight of Waterford, that it was a country well worth fighting for. Waterford is built along the west bank of the Suir,—a most noble stream. Close to its banks, the ground rises on both sides, leaving but a small space of flat ground along the river. In the old part of the town, the streets are steep and narrow; the quay is very spacious, and exceeds a mile in length;—the houses are good, and at its extremity is a very handsome modern street, in which are situated the Bishop's palace and the cathedral. The quay called to my recollection the Garonne at Bourdeaux, though undoubtedly less magnificent; yet is it highly sufficient, and so commodious that ships of considerable burden lie afloat at all times within a short distance of it. An extensive range of ware-

houses has recently been built on land, which sold for this purpose after the rate of eight hundred pounds an acre ; the ground rent for a tolerably good house on the quay, amounts yearly to forty pounds, and lands near the town let for eight pounds an acre. The merchants have lately erected a very handsome exchange and coffee room, where strangers are admitted and received in the most liberal manner. The cathedral is a large building, but its exterior has a mean appearance ; the palace, however, is a handsome and commodious edifice.

Waterford, as a commercial place, has an appearance of opulence, superior to any of the sea-ports we have visited. The breweries and distilleries are extensively employed ; the slaughtering trade has greatly increased of late years ; seventy-five thousand pigs have been exported to England in one year, to be there cured and dried. The agricultural produce alone, exported from Waterford, yearly amounts to three millions sterling ; in 1776, Mr. A. Young states that fifty thousand casks of butter, containing a hundred weight each, were then sent from this port ; at present that number is nearly doubled. The American and Newfoundland trades have been also considerable, and, in the event of peace, would probably revive.

I was suprised to hear of the distance whence the Irish pigs are driven to Waterford; their length of leg in this case is advantageous; and it is possible, that, on this account, they may answer better than those breeds with shorter legs, and a greater disposition to become fat; but which would, probably, be incapable of performing such journeys. The Suir is navigable to Carrick. Through a great part of the town, the pavement is extremely bad, owing, as we understood, to an existing dispute with the coporation; but as that has now terminated in an allowance of twelve hundred pounds per annum from the corporate body, it is presumed that, with the addition of eight hundred a year which the sweepings of the streets are estimated to yield, the pavement, in the course of a few years, may be completed.

Our plan was to have gone through Wexford and Wicklow; but the very unfavorable reports of the roads deterred us; and we were deprived of the gratification of seeing a most romantic and picturesque country, as well as some of the best farming in Ireland.

Hitherto we have travelled along the sea coast; we shall now take our leave of the shore, and have an opportunity of seeing some-

thing of the interior, where I am apprehensive every thing will be found in a worse state. We breakfasted with Mr. Peat: the coal trade makes a constant intercourse between this place and Cumberland.

Sir John Newport was from home; his absence I much regretted, as no man has a more extensive knowledge of the political situation of Ireland, or is more zealously attached to its interests; and few have rendered the country such important services. The beneficial measure, which allowed a free intercourse of grain, he very ably promoted.

We are most anxious to reach Dublin, where we fondly anticipate receiving tidings from England. In the last six weeks, we have been so fortunate as to have had but one thorough day of rain; and we have now travelled eight hundred and thirty miles; the narrative of which may not perhaps have been much less fatiguing to you, than the journey has been to yours, ever, &c. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER XL.

Kilkenny, Sept. 18, 1813.

THE beauty of its situation, together with the bustle and active exertions displayed at Waterford, impressed us highly in its favor. The national union has proved very beneficial to its commerce, which has greatly increased of late years. Unquestionably a participation in the general trade of England, must eventually contribute greatly to the prosperity of Ireland.

The difficulty and delay of ferrying over, deterred us from crossing the Suir, though, by so doing, we should have saved six miles in our journey to the Royal Oak. The wooden bridge of Waterford is little inferior to that at Derry. Much of the country to Knocktopher is very poor, and but thinly inhabited. At a small village, about a mile from Knocktopher, we observed, in the church-yard, a rookery, which was the first we had seen in Ireland; elsewhere it might have proved a nuisance; here, most probably, it little interfered with the devotions of the parishioners.

Sir Henry Langrishe has a fine seat at Knocktopher ; among his farming improvements I had the pleasure to see a small irrigated meadow of fiorin. We had now come twenty miles, and it was with difficulty we could procure a bait for our horses, which was a serious consideration, as we had yet ten miles to Kilkenny.

Sir John Flood's noble and extensive place is within two miles of Knocktopher. The farming, as far as we could judge from the quantity of land under green crops, seemed to be well conducted ; and as the general soil of the country is of good staple, a farmer possessing capital makes such ground productive. The contrast between the farm under the direction of Sir John Flood and those which surround it, is conclusive evidence of the necessity of a due application of capital. Lime here seems to be abundantly used, and is burnt with Kilkenny coal.

We observed several mills on the different streams of water. The fabrication of cloth is pretty extensive, and the people had the appearance of being well employed. The coal of the country, though emitting an offensive smell, is drawn to a great distance, and much of it is consumed in the lime-kilns.

About seven miles before we reached Kilkenny we had a prodigious fine view of the extensive plain in which it is situated ; the country is rich, tolerably well wooded, and abounds with gentlemen's seats. As we approached the town, we found the land well inclosed, and the fences admirable. We had to regret the day so soon closed in. I should, however, do injustice to the exertions of one gentleman, were I to pass unnoticed his castelated mansion. When the appearance of a country suffers no deformity by the operations of individuals, every one is privileged to exercise his own taste for its decoration.

The Irish town, or suburbs, as we should call them, are large, dirty, and comfortless, and, like most other approaches to the larger towns in Ireland, exhibited much wretchedness. We found great bustle in the street, and every other indication of a populous place. The inn is not to be complained of ; but the noxious fumes from the fires are intolerably offensive. Kilkenny coal has long been celebrated as forming one of the wonders of Ireland, in its producing fire without smoke ; which has long ceased to be a wonder in South Wales, whence the stone coal for drying malt is procured ; it is a coal of very similar quality to that found at Kilkenny ;

52 *Noxious Fumes of Kilkenny Coal.*

and is applied in the same manner, and to the like purposes. Smoke from all matters in combustion is more or less offensive ; but it is not to be compared to the oppressive influence of the sulphureous odor which poisons the air of this neighbourhood, and communicates its effluvia to all food with which it is dressed.

When once ignited, it burns bright and intensely for a number of hours without any perceptible smoke ; but, like the stone coal, it requires wood or charcoal, and is troublesome to light. The large coal alone is in use for domestic purposes ; the small, like that in Wales, is applied to the purpose of burning lime. The price is fifty shillings the ton : I wished to have seen the mines, but finding they were five miles out of our road, and that a survey of them would cost us a dozen hours, I did not think them worth that sacrifice.

This has been a very fatiguing day. I shall conclude before we start to morrow.

September 19.

The atmosphere of every part of the house was so saturated with the fumes from the coal, that I felt greatly oppressed, nor could much relief be obtained by opening the windows,

as the external air was equally offensive ; on this account a residence in Kilkenny can by no means be desirable.

On a cursory inspection of the town, this morning, we saw two or three good streets ; at the extremity of one the Earl of Ormond has a noble palace. The cathedral stands on an eminence, and is in a tolerably good style of architecture. The part of it which claims most attention is the round tower, which is a very lofty and imposing feature. A considerable manufactory of coarse woollens is established here, and blankets are also manufactured of extraordinary lightness, and fineness of quality.

It being Sunday, the crowds of all ranks seen in the streets on their way to mass afforded a sample of the population, which is estimated at twenty thousand souls. The common people were observed to be ill dressed, very noisy, and many of them inebriated. We had not seen so much disorder any where but at Galway.

The situation of the inhabitants on the coast, I have no doubt, is superior to that of the interior ; for though the general state of trade is not flourishing, still it creates some degree of acti-

vity, and furnishes employment to many who would otherwise be idle. We are now setting out for the Royal Oak, where we purpose to breakfast, and I mean there to employ my Sunday morning in discussing a question of vital importance; namely, the state of religious parties in Ireland. Adieu.

J. C. C.

The above being the last of the series of letters from the author to the editor, the latter has been obliged to insert them in the order in which they were received. The author has been very kind to send me a copy of the volume, and I have been very much interested in reading it. The volume is a very good one, and I have been very much interested in reading it. The author has been very kind to send me a copy of the volume, and I have been very much interested in reading it.

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LETTER, XLI.

Royal Oak, Sept. 19, 1813.

IN compliance with the promise I made in my last from Kilkenny, I sit down to a task of not less difficulty than delicacy.

Truth is the primary object in all investigations, but pre-eminently so in matters relative to different religious persuasions. To arrive at the truth, every precaution should be taken, that the passions do not influence the understanding, or warp the judgment: in the ordinary concerns of life, this on all occasions is deemed indispensable, and admitted to be just: how greatly then is it to be deplored that in the discussion of a subject, where a more than usual share of temper, moderation, and forbearance, is required, we find these virtuous qualities least in practice, even by those eminently distinguished for liberality, wisdom, and piety. We are always disinclined to avow our private sentiments in the examination of controverted points, lest our opinions should prove to be ge-

nerally unesteemed, or unacceptable to those whom we respect.

Conciliation and mutual concession, in ages past, would have spared mankind torrents of tears, and oceans of blood; independently of their having in the mean time been deprived of the full benefit of the Christian dispensation.

The least alteration of the telescope from its true focus, destroys all its powers; distant objects, instead of becoming more perceptible, are rendered obscure—frequently diminished, and often perverted. If the principle of human intelligence be likened to this instrument, shall the focus of its perceptions be treated with less respect? or, shall the natural or acquired predispositions and biases of the human heart be considered as less entitled to the care and attention of those skilled in the optics of religion, and in the best practices of morality?

On the great question of catholic emancipation, I should glory in conferring with a mind competent to its full investigation, dispassionate, and free from all polemical prejudices and political predeterminations. To such a person I should not feel ashamed to acknowledge, that it is the

apprehension of these influences on my intellect, which have hitherto deterred me from entering on the subject. This concession I would gladly make in the hope of imbibing the opinions of one so liberally and effectually endowed. But as I know not where this prodigy is to be found, I must continue to doubt the impressions on my own mind, and distrust the competence and candour of others.

The influence of religion on national character is so powerful, that a very slight acquaintance with the History of Ireland is sufficient to show, how great a proportion of the miseries, which have afflicted this country for the last two hundred years, have had their origin in the religious persuasions of the people; whose utter ignorance has been practised on by unworthy members of their church, till persecution and oppression have engendered the most direful passions, and given birth to crimes and enormities without number. Charity, which ought to be the rule of conduct in both parties, is exercised very feebly by either—hence the protestant and catholic are equally prone to credit all those existing calumnies against each other, which wickedness or folly may be disposed to invent and propagate. The established church, supported as it is by govern-

58 Catholics Seven to One to Protestants.

ment, trembles for her existence, while the catholics are kept under a constant dread of extirpation. The smallest spark, at all times, may be apprehended as sufficient to produce an explosion. The nation, says Mr. Burke, "is at present divided into two almost distinct bodies, with little common interest, sympathy, or connexion—one of these possesses all the franchises—all the property—all the education. The other is composed of drawers of water and cutters of turf for them. Ought we to be astonished that when they are reduced to a mob, if they happen to act at all, they will act exactly like a mob; without temper, measure, or foresight?" This description, than which nothing could be more correct at the time, would have suited any period equally well, in the one hundred and fifty preceding years.

Can it be matter of surprise that the catholics, who are perhaps nearly seven to one when compared with the members of the established church, should consider themselves unjustly and hardly treated, whilst a vestige of their former state of bondage is remaining? Every concession which they have received is in their estimation a recognition of wrong, and a ground for their demand of perfect emancipation. Every measure yielded by government

is by them declared to have been extorted and granted piece-meal ; while every legislative step has evinced a want of wisdom, and compelled the admission of others—a conduct that, it is fondly hoped, must ultimately procure for them that relief, which substantial justice and sound policy ought to have secured to the country long ago.

In some instances the very favours granted the catholics are considered as sources of aggravation, if not of insult—emblazoned badges of slavery ! In conferring the elective franchise they have been denied the exercise of a free choice, the proudest prerogative of Englishmen ; and compelled to feel, in the discharge of the granted privilege, their own inferiority. What a reproach to Great Britain, that one of her most valuable provinces, and in her immediate vicinity, should have remained for such a number of years in so perfect a state of ignorance, wretchedness, and misery !

As a sample of the extreme bigotry and ignorance of the times, Leland informs us, that an Irish Bishop was celebrated for the composition of a hymn, in barbarous Latin rhyme, in praise of St. Macartin, whilst his brethren in other countries were engaged in discussions on the most important points of religion. When

Rome herself had confessed with shame the follies and enormities which had disgraced her communion, her votaries in Ireland depended, in their dying hour, on being wrapped in the cowl of St. Francis for their salvation.

A knowledge of the Gospel had opened the eyes of the people in England to the excesses and abuses of the church of Rome, and prepared their minds for a reform in their religious tenets and observances. Foul as was the elevated source whence the reformation sprung, the current became purified as it descended among the people, and was soon received and accepted by the nation, as a stream that would fertilize the human mind, and, in the King's assumption of supremacy, extinguish the fulminating bulls of papal tyranny. At this time, it was by no means difficult to persuade a submissive parliament, that whatever laws might be required of them it was their implicit duty to enact: yet did the papal power in Ireland continue unimpeached, the laws considered as little more than a dead letter, and the whole contumaciously rejected, notwithstanding the declared supremacy of Henry the Eighth.

Ignorance in Ireland, at this period, seems to have been regarded in England as a physical

disability, impossible to be overcome, or as an indigenous weed incapable of extermination; for neither attention nor solicitude appears to have actuated the rulers in taking measures for the people's instruction. In the year 1552 there is a remonstrance made with great feeling by an Irish Chancellor to the Lords justices of Ireland. "Hard is it," says he, "that men should know their duties to God and the King, when they shall not have teaching or preaching through the year. Teaching we have none, which is our ill luck—without which the ignorant can have no knowledge." What a repulsive picture is here presented of the then state of the country.—And how far is it dissimilar from the truth, in the present day?

Elizabeth was strongly urged by that virtuous and able statesman Sir Henry Sidney, to consent to the church service being rendered into Irish, and qualified persons sent to preach in a language which the people could comprehend. Deeply is it to be lamented, that measures fraught equally with wisdom and humanity should have been so totally disregarded. The principles on which government acted are not left to conjecture; yet, if they were not on record, it would scarce be credible that an enlightened nation could have been so influenced

62 *Mistaken Policy of Queen Elizabeth.*

by the barbarous policy of those days, and continued with little exception, as a rule of conduct towards Ireland, until modern times.

To impoverish and stultify a nation for the express purpose of securing their allegiance, might be consistent with the political doctrines of a Dey of Algiers, but are highly at variance and repugnant to British feelings.

The true source of all the vexations experienced by Queen Elizabeth from Ireland, was in her mistaken policy. Had she adopted a contrary conduct, and promoted the civilization of the people, and the general interests of the country, it would have saved the blood and treasure of her English subjects, rescued Ireland from infinite misery, and her reign from perpetual reproach.

The perfection of the system of disabilities was, however, reserved for the reign of Queen Anne. Mr. Burke, in his letter to Sir H. Langrishe, to which I have before referred, gives an admirable description of them. "You abhorred it, as I did, for its vicious perfection; for I must do it justice, it was a complete system—full of coherence and consistency—well digested, and well composed in all its parts—it was a machine

Disabilities to which the Irish were subject. 63

of wise and elaborate contrivance, and as well fitted for the oppression, impoverishment, and degradation of a people, and debasement of them, and of human nature itself, as ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man." Such is the strong and faithful representation given by this great statesman, of the severities and the effect of them, as exercised under the specious pretence of a regard for religion. A recital of some few disabilities, to which the catholics were made subject, will prove this picture was not too highly drawn. It was enacted in this code, that, the elder son of a catholic remaining a catholic, the younger professing himself a protestant in his father's lifetime should inherit the estate. Thus at one blow was the domestic security and confidence of two parts out of three of the whole nation destroyed.—The catholics were prohibited from residing in towns, and the distrust of them proclaimed, by withholding from them the right of possessing arms.

Though persecution should appear to be sanctioned by the most specious pretences or imposing authority, nothing can be more odious; and in no shape can it assail mankind so cruelly, as when it proceeds to restrain education, and condemn the people to ignorance,

64 *Priests duly educated and compensated.*

as was the case in Ireland, without furthering the cause of protestantism.

If emancipation be a question of political influence only, connected with the ambition of a few individuals, and unimportant to the great bulk of the people, it is truly insignificant—but, can any measures be considered as of trivial consequence to the happiness of a people, which, in its concession, would allay the heart burnings, and feverish disgusts of a whole nation—that would restore unanimity and order, where enmity and turbulence destroy private security and public confidence? Can a restoration of the full enjoyment of civil rights to seven tenths of the people, be a matter of no serious moment? Is a participation in the employments and protection of the government of no consequence? Jealousy, distrust, and hatred, are the necessary consequences of religious persecutions. Intolerance has to answer for the bigotry and ignorance, which so long has inflicted misery on Ireland. Were the priests well educated themselves, and liberally compensated for instructing the people, over whose minds they possess so much influence, most of the objections which at present apply to their religious ceremonials would cease to exist. The miserable pittance of their pastors, mean as it

Better Provision for Catholic Priests. 65

is, depends on the abject thralldom in which these shepherds are enabled to keep their respective flocks : hence a desire on their parts to enlighten those on whose ignorance they rely for their daily subsistence, would be expecting a degree of disinterestedness beyond what is usually met with in human nature.

A more suitable provision for the catholic priest would be attended with the most beneficial consequences ; it would soon render this sacred office an object to persons of education, instead of its being, as at present, confined to those of the lower orders, whose education is limited, and whose opportunities of acquiring that information and knowledge, so requisite to correct their own prejudices, are equally contracted.

: Doubts have been entertained whether it would not have been fortunate for Ireland, and in the end conducive to its happiness and prosperity, as well as beneficial to Great Britain, had catholicism been permitted to remain the established persuasion of that country, where, at present, this community may be considered as forming so great a majority of the population ; while the-presbyterians amount to one-tenth, and the other two-tenths persons

66 *Want of Moral Restraint too general.*

neither papists nor catholics, and who are therefore reckoned churchmen; or, on a supposition of the aggregate population being six millions, four of the number would be catholics, three quarters of a million presbyterians, and a million and a quarter protestants, methodists, and other sectaries. Acceding, as I am inclined to do, to this opinion, I can hardly think it possible, had such been the case, that the country could have been in the extreme state of ignorance, and consequent misery, under which it is suffering at this day. Man in a state of society must be made sensible of his indispensable duty to God, before it can be hoped he will have respect for the institutions of man. From the want of moral restraint arises a great portion of the crimes so disgraceful to Ireland. The complaint made in the year 1552, "that there were no preachments to the people," might, I believe, be now very faithfully urged; for if the towns be excepted, I fear there is but little time bestowed by the village clergy in the instruction of their congregations.

The well-founded complaints of the Irish afford but too favourable an opportunity of engrafting on their minds the political opinions which have so long agitated Europe. The advantage to be taken of this was too apparent to

Ireland, the vulnerable Part of the Empire. 67

be overlooked by the tyrant of France; and had the whole of his powerful efforts been directed to the shores of this country, it is doubtful how the contest might have terminated. The weak side of England is on the Irish coast, and so it must inevitably continue, until the many causes of complaint, which are now generally admitted, are taken most seriously into the consideration of the British parliament. These being admitted, however, is no small acquisition, as it is the previous step to their redress—God grant that a wise, enlightened, and undeviating policy, may heal those wounds that have been, and are still, so grievously felt by Ireland, and so injurious to the prosperity and tranquillity of England. Mr. Burke says, and I think truly, “Our constitution is not made for great general proscriptive exclusions; for sooner or later it will destroy them, or they will destroy it.”

Dispersed as the established church is, in small communities, it is not possible, in our transient view of the country, to form any accurate judgment: we saw several churches building, others repairing, and parsonage houses erecting, in many parishes. The residence of the clergy, which cannot fail of being attended with important advantages, is now insisted on

by the bishops. This will not only stimulate the protestant to a discharge of his religious duties, but will remove from the divines of the established church the reproach of attending to nothing but their temporal concerns. The commutation for their tithes will be assessed by themselves, and much of the oppression, which is at present exercised, by those to whom this power is delegated, will be avoided. The placing of the parochial clergy on a respectable footing, and the requiring of their residence among their parishioners, have given general satisfaction, and reflect great credit on the minister, who was the proposer of measures so fraught with advantages to the lower orders of the people.

If common report is to be credited, the most scandalous traffic in church preferment has been carried on in this country, not less degrading to the church, and injurious to the cause of religion, than it is derogatory to the assumed pretensions of individuals of the Irish government, from which it is to be lamented this patronage was not wrested at the time of the union. In England, the selection of fit persons to fill the first situations in the church, and execute the first offices of the law, has in few instances been subjected to animadversion. It would be a most happy circumstance for Ire-

Increased Value of Church Preferments. 69

land, if occasions for exceptions against such appointments did not so frequently occur.

I had so little opportunity of noticing the presbyterians, as a community, that I could form no opinion of their influence in Ireland; but from my acquaintance with individuals holding their tenets elsewhere, I should be disposed to entertain a favourable opinion of their general conduct. Methodism has yet made but little progress among the Irish; and wishing well, as I sincerely do, to so brave, so generous, and affectionate a people, I cannot but rejoice that this sect has had so little of success. The value of church livings is greatly increased since the year 1806, when a free trade in grain was permitted. Whether, after the demise of the present incumbents, the parishes in which the livings are most lucrative might not be divided, or their incomes applied to other purposes conducive to the general interests of religion, is a question well deserving the serious consideration of Government. Pardon this long discussion—and believe me ever yours. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER XLII.

Castle Dermont, Sept. 19, 1813.

ON quitting Kilkenny, we were much pleased with the general aspect of the country, the soil of which is fertile, and the cultivation of it very tolerable. The town stands partly on an eminence, the shore is a grand river, and its banks are rich. Ground near the town lets at the extravagant rate of from four to six pounds per acre. New milk is sold in summer at two-pence, in winter at three-pence a quart; which is as high as in most towns in England. Laborers' wages, during the time of harvest, are twenty-pence a day; at other times, under a shilling.

At Kilkenny we experienced, for the first time, incivility. On inquiring our way to the cathedral, we were directed to an opposite quarter of the town; and, though the reply to our question was made in the hearing of numbers of bystanders, not one of them had either the good humour or good manners to correct

the false information. I record it, not as matter that gave us umbrage, but as the reverse of conduct we had every where else received.

In the course of our drive to the Royal Oak, which is ten miles from Kilkenny, we passed numbers of people on their road to mass, and were much pleased to observe that the demeanour and dress of these parties were greatly superior to those we had seen in the morning. The inclosures are large; and, from the appearance of the buildings, I should be led to infer the size of the farms was in proportion to that of the fields. Fallowing seems to be carried to a considerable extent on the soil which is clay. The pernicious custom of cropping incessantly with grain, and of forcing with lime, was, however, apparent. We noticed a field of Egyptian wheat: it had been sown too late, and was still green. To give this wheat a fair chance of success, it should be raised on a sharp gravelly soil, and in a warm and sheltered situation. Potatoes were almost all set in lazy beds; we scarcely saw an instance of their being drilled; a pretty strong proof that little attention is paid to the agriculture of the district. The cabins appeared to be less comfortless, which always afforded us pleasure. Place man in that state in which, as a rational creature, he ought to be,

and Ireland would be the delight of all beholders.

For two or three miles before we reached the Royal Oak, we had on our right a great range of meadows extending to the river. We were surprised to see the grass on some of them uncut—the want of fodder had compelled the occupiers to depasture the meadows so late that they had not yet been able to mow. If an argument in favour of cultivating green crops could by possibility be wanting, this fact would furnish one that must be admitted as conclusive. To succeed in the growth of green crops, the farmer here must be able to create a supply of manure beyond what is required for his potatoes. The knowledge, that, by the ashes obtained from burning the surface, turnips may be produced, does not appear to have reached this quarter; or if it be arrived, it is unpractised. The exuberant fertility of the soil in Ireland enables the husbandman to proceed in a manner, which, if pursued in England, would long ago have made that garden a desert. A century ago Swift complained of the ruinous custom of over cropping; in later times, it has been carried to an extent far exceeding the practice of his days; and, though still persisted in, there is no deficiency of produce.

The Royal Oak is a small village, not generally appearing in the maps, with a very clean neat inn, the master of which has a farm of some extent. In his farm-shed was a portable threshing machine, by means of which much of his crops had already been threshed out; but the straw was so neglected as to prove of how little value it was in his estimation. In those parts where the worth of manure is accurately understood, even the loss of straw requisite for thatching is a consideration of infinite regret.

Ploughing is better performed in this district than in most we have seen; and though I cannot compliment, I must acknowledge to have seen a considerable improvement in the husbandry of this part of the country; but not an acre of green crop have we beheld since those we noticed of Sir H. Flood's. We passed several gentlemen's seats; land lets from three to five pounds the customary acre, about forty-five shillings the statute acre, exclusive of the tithes. How few districts are there in England where the rents are so high!

Whilst at breakfast, a mail-coach stopped to change horses: the apparent neatness and good style of these vehicles are most creditable;

equal, if not superior, to the English mails, and forming a most excellent pattern for the correction of the Irish posting business.

Two miles from the Royal Oak, we crossed the river Barrow at Leighlin bridge. The town contains one very long street, with two catholic chapels, nearly adjoining each other. The congregations were dispersing as we arrived: the street and road were filled for above a mile, and their numbers we could not estimate at less than three thousand persons. From the various directions the people took, we supposed they had assembled from the neighbouring villages: their dress and manners *were extremely decent*. Contrary to the usual custom, the women wore beaver hats. The general usage of exposing the face, besides destroying the complexion, compels a contraction of the brow, which gives an unpleasant expression to the female countenance. It is certainly extraordinary, but it is not less true, that beauty in the sex is as much prized, and as little taken care of, in Ireland, as in any country in the civilized world.

Near the bridge at Leighlin is a spa of some celebrity: the spot is shaded, and greatly ornamented by some very fine ash trees. We found here a market holding for laborers; it

Cumbersome Dress of the Laborers. 75

commences as soon as the service in the chapel is over. The men had with them their *lays*. These appear to be an ill-adapted implement for taking up potatoes.

It is difficult to conjecture where the Irish have borrowed their present dress: the pride of manhood, and the hope of youth, is the *trusty*—resembling a box-coat. This is the first object of their ambition; and though cumbersome, unwieldy, and an impediment to every exertion, it is with difficulty they are persuaded to lay it aside; for with their own inclination the men would always work in it, regardless of its weight and incumbrance; this covers a waistcoat or jacket with sleeves; and be the wearer ever so stout or athletic, he is lost in the size of his *trusty*.

The present style of dress is so different from that which Spencer is at so much pains to reprobate, that it excites a desire to trace how such a preposterous habit should have become so generally adopted.

Moryson observes, “I cannot deny that (the mantle) was anciently common in north countries, and got disused and laid away. But in the latter ages of the world, since the decay of

✓ the Roman empire, it was renewed and brought again by those northern nations, when, breaking out of their cold caves and frozen habitations into the sweet soyle of Europe, they brought with them their usual weedes for to shield the cold of that country at first, in which they had at home been inured, the which they left not off, by reason they were in perpetual warres; coming lastly into Ireland, they found the more special use thereof, by reason of the cold snowe climate, from whence it is now grown into general use in which that people now have it; after whom the Guals succeeding, yet finding the like necessity of that garment, continued the like use thereof."

From Leighlin bridge to Carlow is six miles : beautiful as the vale of Dungarvon confessedly is, the enchantments of this scenery far exceed it. The prospect is not only more extensive, but the country is richer, the objects more picturesque, and the features more sublime. The valley is about six miles broad, bounded on each side by a chain of mountains finely wooded, well enclosed, and cultivated to their summits. We saw a number of villages and gentlemen's seats; and, what were still more pleasurable objects, the cottages were white-washed, and mostly sheltered by trees, which imparted to them an air of

rural comfort and neighbourhood seldom to be met with in Ireland. Carlow is a neat town, of considerable extent, and charmingly situated, forming a conspicuous feature in the landscape.

In the course of our drive, we met a number of people returning from harvest work in the Queen's County and Kildare. So early a harvest is scarcely to be remembered. In the Lothians last year I saw barley uncut on the 14th October, and at Long Town several days later. Close to Carlow, on either side of the turnpike road, are two spacious gentlemen's seats opposite to each other. Here the country assumes a perfectly new character, and becomes a flat uninteresting plain of considerable extent, with a soil that justifies the inference of its being reclaimed bog. The loveliness of the country from Leighlin bridge to Carlow is a complete contrast to the dreary surface which continues for five miles to Castle Dermot; a place that in former times was a station of great importance, and the residence of the Dermot family, who held a rank among the petty sovereigns of Ireland. The ruins of monasteries, and of other religious edifices, indicate its former population and consequence; besides which, it was considered as a place of considerable military strength; but, in

78 *Comfortless Fare at Castle Dermot.*

the mutability of human affairs, Castle Dermot has lost all pretensions to the name of town, and can now only be described as a poor village.

The agreeable appearance of two post-chaises at the inn door, as we approached it, encouraged the hope of at least comfortable accommodations; but our disappointments in these particulars have been so frequent, that we have learned to laugh, and bear them patiently. It was fortunate, on the present occasion, that we were in possession of this disposition of mind; we had no alternative, and no hope, but that of reaching Dublin in good time the next day, to reconcile us to our comfortless fare.

The rooms in the lower part of the house were engaged by parties in attendance on the Proctor to agree for his tithes; a few of the most substantial farmers were permitted to associate with the great man; from whom, as we afterwards learned, no Turkish Bashaw could have exacted greater deference.

The inferior occupiers leisurely waited until it suited the pleasure or convenience of this important person to grant them an audience. We understood the parties had been

assembled, and for the second time, some hours before our arrival. On the preceding Sunday they had been convened for the like purpose, but had parted without coming to any arrangement.

The larder, as might be expected, from such a concourse of people, was quite exhausted; but where good bread, butter, and fresh eggs, not easily spoiled in cooking, can be procured, I have no pity for those who should be disposed to quarrel with such viands.

Want of comfort on retiring to rest has all along been the most unbearable privation. I do not murmur at linen being coarse; but habit, and the prejudice of education, have taught me, I confess, to like it clean. I am also not particularly scrupulous in having a bed-room that should, in point of size, contain not less than a certain number of square feet; but I acknowledge my regret, when such an apartment happens to be destitute of a chimney, or has a window that will not open! The luxury of ventilation we have constantly found in Ireland to be an unknown gratification.

Our intention being to start at five, we were disposed to retire early; but our heads had scarcely reached their pillows before we dis-

80 *Tyranny and Rapacity of Tithe Proctors.*

covered we had little chance for sleep. The Proctor and his party were in a large room beneath those in which were our beds. As the liquor began to elevate the spirits of the tenantry, their obsequiousness appeared to subside. An overbearing conduct, exceeding all bounds, on the part of the Proctor, was too loudly proclaimed to be mistaken, or pass without our disgust and anger at being thus interrupted, and compelled to be unwilling auditors of their noisy vociferations.

I had often heard of the tyranny of tithe proctors, but had never before had any demonstration of it. The protracted silence of the Proctor on the immediate object of the meeting had seemed at length to exhaust the patience of the company. One of them civilly inquired on what terms he and his neighbours might expect to have their tithes? After great hesitation, at last, the Proctor, on naming his price, was informed that the demands were greater than would be required by the neighbouring gentlemen. This observation wounded his pride; and on his observing that such persons were only nominally proprietors, and that the proctors were the real holders of the land, his opponent made a reply, which so enraged him, that he changed his ground from the

Conclusion of the Proctor's Meeting. 81

collection of tithes, to charges of rebellion, and a reference to manual arguments, which might have been attended with serious effects to the combatants, had not the females of the house interfered and hurried the poor fellow away. Peace was no sooner restored, than the champion of their rights was forgotten by his neighbours, in their adulatory complaisance to the Proctor; who now became "determined not to treat for the tithes," and proudly called for the bill, which "after such usage he would pay himself;" but after much abject submission and entreaty, the parties at length were not only indulged with the discharge of it, but with an appointment for a third congress, on the following Sunday. The inferior holders, in the other parts of the house, who had been waiting all the afternoon, were now ushered into the presence of the Proctor; but on his discovering it to be nearly two o'clock in the morning, there was no alternative but to adjourn, in the hope of the next being a more fortunate meeting.

Much as we had heard of the tyranny of proctors and middle men in Ireland, the unfeeling domination at this meeting exceeded in violence what I could have imagined. Admitting the circumstances to form an extreme case,

82 *Real Characters of Proctors not known.*

which is greatly to be doubted, it is time such oppressive conduct should be corrected : necessarily it must create general aversion and discontent. The sacrifice of time and money was a grievous hardship on the small farmers, who, after all, would have to pay exorbitantly and to the utmost farthing !

I could not help wishing that my place, by some fortunate event, had been occupied by the Duke of Leinster, or some other great Irish proprietor ; that an opportunity might have been afforded, to such an elevated character, of learning in how little estimation the landholders are held, by these very men, to whom they delegate their power and their property : and also of witnessing the very improper manner in which their humble tenantry are treated by these overbearing despots, who truckle in the presence of their superiors, and under the semblance of humility and moderation conceal their real characters.

The loss of a night's sleep I do not regret, in becoming personally certified of the cruelty thus practised on the poor occupiers by the proctors, which I could not otherwise have credited. They had now been expensively detained nearly two days from home, and were to sacrifice a

third, for the purpose of coming to an agreement which might have been concluded in half an hour.

Having a short time at my command before the horses could be ready, I determined to commit in the abstract, to paper, what I had heard; lest in recording the enormities we had witnessed, I might hereafter suspect my feelings had misled my recollection; being well aware how much reflection would be likely to augment my indignation and detestation of such tyrannical behaviour.

We have now thirty-eight, little short of fifty English miles to Dublin; which will be a severe day's work for our poor horses, after the services they have already performed. I am prepared to expect in Dublin such gratifications for the eye, as may probably be equal, if not superior to any thing I have ever beheld in any part of Europe. While we approach the spot where we fondly expect tidings from home, the anxiety for the possession of our letters increases, as the distance from them becomes reduced. Ever yours.

J. C. C.

LETTER XLIII.

Dublin, Sept. 20, 1813.

GREATNESS, whether appearing in the productions of nature, or works of art, rarely fails to excite in the mind sentiments of admiration proportionate to the magnitude, magnificence, or extensiveness of the object contemplated. Who can behold a continuous mass of lofty mountains hiding their towering heads among the clouds, or the expansive interminable ocean, without feelings of the sublimest reverence and awe? the former inspiring a just sense of our own inferiority in the scale of creation; the latter furnishing the mind with ideas of eternity. The diversity and combination of interests mutually and successfully operating on each other, in the aggregate of a large city, are incontestable proofs of the splendid endowments of man; who can, out of such discordant materials, produce so much order and harmony.

Dublin unites interior splendor, with many facilities for commerce. Sackville street, in which we were placed, is a very handsome one :

here we found a most comfortable hotel, and, what was infinitely more gratifying to us, letters without number. For above a month I had been without any tidings from Cumberland, and such was now the luxurious feast, in which I became instantaneously absorbed, that no other idea obtruded until I had perused the whole, and learned with inexpressible delight that all at home were well. In the midst of the extremely diversified objects with which this enchanting country abounds, I could not so rivet my thoughts on new and pleasing objects, as to avoid a frequent recurrence to those of superior interest I had left behind. Though ardent in my pursuits, and anxious for their successful result, my mind is, unfortunately, so constructed, that I am more disposed to regard the dark than the bright side of all human transactions; and to anticipate ills rather than indulge in hope. The optimist is greatly to be envied so far as respects his individual happiness, though I am led to believe he occasionally pays severely for the felicity produced by his unwise credulity. The want of regular communication by letter had been a sad abstraction from the pleasure of our journey: another time I shall endeavour to provide against the recurrence of a mortification, which has been endured as a merited punishment for our want of

local knowledge of the country through which we meditated to travel.

Having answered such letters as required immediate attention, I recur to my promised diary.

Great as has been the gratification of this tour, a daily review of the various objects for your amusement has not been that part of it, which to me is and has been the least pleasurable.

Our situation last night was by no means desirable. By the sacrifice of a night's sleep, however, I procured some insight, which otherwise I could not have attained, into the conduct of a class of men, in which I must include, with the tithe proctors, the middle men, or tenants, standing between the owners and cultivators of the soil. Had I not thus accidentally become a witness to their misconduct, I should hardly have credited that such unfeeling tyranny could have been exercised. If such be the general practice with both these descriptions of persons, and much I fear it is, it accounts for much of that want of order in the Irish peasantry, which is incomprehensible to those on your side of the Channel. Can it be matter of

Their Political and Domestic Condition. 87

wonder that the honest, though irritated, feelings of a laborious people, perpetually smarting under so coarse a lash of insolent authority, without appeal or redress, should cause them to lose sight of that obedience which is due to the laws of their country.

I would fain hope that the present desire of becoming more intimately acquainted with the general state of Ireland, so prevalent in England, will be productive of effects superior to those confined to the mere gratification of curiosity. Not only the government of Ireland, but the nobleman, the gentleman, the rector, and all who have local interests in its prosperity, will, through so desirable an investigation, obtain an impartial and correct view of the political situation and domestic condition of their suffering neighbours, and become actively alive to their hopelessness and despondency ; for I cannot help repeating, how strongly I am urged to believe, that a very large portion of the ills endured in this country have sprung from a complete ignorance in these parties of the real causes from which the miseries of their dependants have arisen. The whole arrangement, from the opulent proprietor of myriads of acres, down to the cultivating cottier of a few lazy beds, demands immediate attention and correction ;

88 *Relief of Oppressions on the Lower Classes.*

it is at present a complete system of delegated exaction and tyranny, exercised with such an impunity, as is unknown in any other community of the British empire, as destructive of public prosperity and repose, as it is injurious to private interests and happiness. What a blessing would a redress of these oppressions be to the industrious classes, and how grateful and beneficial would such a reform be to the upper ranks of society? Heaven grant it may speedily be undertaken and effectually concluded.

In starting this morning, we anticipated daylight, and were joined by a gentleman on horseback, going to Dublin; who had spent the night in another part of the inn, and had been an equal sufferer with ourselves.

The country improved as we left Castle Dermot: the stubbles bespoke very fine crops; the surface is much diversified; and the hedges, which greatly increase the beauty of the fields, were mostly composed of luxuriant white-thorn. The road had formerly proceeded in a right line over the top of every hill that intercepted its path; but by judiciously varying the line these ascents are avoided. In this fifteen mile stage to Killcullen, an hour and a half will be saved when the new road is completed.

From a hill which the road crosses, about half way to Killcullen, we had a most extensive view of the plain and curragh of Kildare, and were approached on our right, by the Wicklow mountains. The soil of this district is excellent, but little can be offered in favour of its management; yet the produce appeared to be abundant, when the labor and manure bestowed on it are taken into consideration. According to our English ideas of farming, such treatment as lands here receive would with us soon prove ruinous to the soil, the landlord, and the tenant. Many gentlemen's seats were distinguishable, some of which were agreeably surrounded with plantations. A little beyond Timolin is the pleasantly situated village of Ballytore, celebrated as the spot where the illustrious Mr. Burke received his education, under the care of Mr. Shackleton, an amiable and enlightened quaker.

The admiration, nay, astonishment, with which I have so often listened to Mr. Burke, gave an interest to every spot connected with his memory, and forcibly brought to my recollection the profundity and extent of his knowledge, while the energy, warmth, and beauty of his imagery, captured the heart, and made judgment tributary to his will. As an orator,

Mr. Burke surpassed all his contemporaries, and was, perhaps, never exceeded. As a politician and debater, it is much to be lamented that his want of temper destroyed the effect of his brilliant talents; of which, though splendid and captivating, this unfortunate influence was the bane. The redundancy of his imagination led him, by frequently digressing, so wide from his subject, as to be imperfectly understood, though he was never otherwise than interesting and impressive. I had not the pleasure of his acquaintance until his decline in life; when, according to the opinion of those most intimate with him, his temper had become so very irritable, that he could bear no sort of opposition on subjects in which he was interested. I believe him to have been perfectly sincere in his fears of all the consequences which he anticipated as likely to attend the speculative opinions then pervading various part of Europe; and that these apprehensions had arisen in his capacious mind, previous to the French revolution. Aversion to all popular sway rendered him blind to every abuse in the various monarchical governments on the Continent, which had alienated the affections of their subjects.

Political connexions had early made him the champion of liberty, and the friend to American

independence ; but these perhaps were not his real unbiassed opinions, as I have ever regarded him to be a whig from interest, though a tory in principle. In the religious as well as political tenets, by which his conduct was governed, he was equally intolerant. This opinion is confirmed by circumstances which fell under my observation in the spring of 1790, when the Duke of Athol's claims on the Isle of Man were under examination. I then frequently saw Mr. Burke, and being asked to breakfast with him, to meet a professor from the University of Leipsic at his house in Gerard-street, the conversation principally turned on the state of the German Empire, and the views and conduct of the Illuminati. Mr. Burke considered their influence to be of a very extensive and dangerous nature, and that the Emperor Joseph had been made their dupe ; that the changes in Bohemia, emancipating the people from feudal oppression, had been at the instigation of the Illuminati, and to them were attributable the subsequent disturbances.

Though completely ignorant, at that period, of every matter relative to farming, I had been much pleased with the appearance of Bohemia, where the industry and energy of the people seemed to be greater ; and, as far as superficial

observations enabled me to form a judgment, the cultivation of its soil seemed to surpass that of the neighbouring states. This information, as I had so recently passed through the country, I thought might be acceptable, and have some weight in our discussions—but I was mistaken ; Mr. Burke burst out into a paroxysm of rage, and, in the most unqualified language, positively denied the facts I had stated. I was not less astonished than hurt at this departure from good breeding ; but there was no alternative, between a silent suppression of the indignity I received, and a positive quarrel.

I continued on friendly terms with Mr. Burke until after his unprovoked and cold-blooded attack on Mr. Fox, the cruelty of which admits of no extenuation : had it occurred in the heat of debate, some excuse might have been pleaded. It was known that he differed from Mr. Fox on the topic of the revolution in France, and it had been intimated for some days that Mr. Burke intended to pronounce a bitter invective against the party : there was no question before the house, nor did he premise that he had any to propose ; but, contrary to order, he entered on the subject of the French revolution. The matter and the manner of Mr. Fox's reply interested the feelings of

every individual in the house, whose heart was not ossified by the corrupt lust of power. Mr. Pitt, in my opinion, never lost himself more than at the moment he was cheering and seeming to approve this unjustifiable attack. To abet the dereliction of friends, for the purpose strengthening his own situation, and securing to himself a further acquisition of power and support, might be consonant to the views of base and of sordid minds; but it was wholly unworthy of Mr. Pitt.

The most powerful feelings were manifested on the adjournment of the house;—Mr. Burke's violence had completely destroyed the effect, which the wisdom of his political maxims, under other circumstances, was calculated to inspire. If they, whose views he meant to further, had spoken candidly, they must have avowed, that he had injured the cause it was his intention to benefit.

Whilst I was waiting for my carriage, Mr. Burke came up to me and requested, as the night was wet, I would set him down—I could not refuse—though I confess I felt a reluctance in complying. As soon as the carriage door was shut, he complimented me on my being no friend to the revolutionary doctrines of the French; on which he spoke with great warmth

for a few minutes; when he paused, to afford me an opportunity of approving the view he had taken of those measures in the House. Former experience had taught me the consequences of dissenting from his opinions, yet, at the moment, I could not help feeling disinclined to disguise or stifle my sentiments. In a few words, I declared that I differed most completely from him—that I sincerely wished to every nation a constitution as free as our own, and that the cause of liberty might triumph all over the world!—Mr. Burke, catching hold of the check-string, furiously exclaimed, “You are one of these people! set me down!” With some difficulty I restrained him;—we had then reached Charing-Cross—a silence ensued, which was preserved till we reached his house in Gerard-street, when he hurried out of the carriage without speaking, and thus our intercourse ended.

Though I often, afterwards, found myself accidentally seated next Mr. Burke in the House of Commons, every interchange of civility between us was suspended.

On the first question of the Regency, I differed, as you will recollect, from Mr. Fox: when the division was proceeding, Mr. Burke espied me remaining in my seat; he turned

about, and repeatedly called on me; but as I obeyed not his summons, a laugh at his expense ensued: though he was evidently displeased, I must do him the justice to say, he did not resent it.

The miseries which have resulted from the system of politics adopted by Mr. Pitt, we and most part of the civilized world have been doomed to feel. How this immensity of evil might have been avoided, or what might have been our situation, had a different policy been pursued, is mere speculation. Those who have taken a part either in supporting or opposing these measures are, in my humble opinion, incompetent judges—the decision must rest with posterity. It is more than probable that neither party will be found entirely blameless. The majority can never always be right, nor the minority always wrong! Time, however, has happily softened down the asperities which contention too often provoked.

In retaining a faithful recollection of my former opinions, I candidly acknowledge they were often injudiciously supported. The attachment to friends, and the ardent feelings of the moment, excited by temporary circumstances, have extorted submissions to the one

96 *Disaffection of the People of Kilcullen.*

side, and furnished oppositions to the other, on matters, to which, at the time, I probably attached an unmerited interest, but which I have long since thought fit to consign to oblivion.

We were fortunate in our companion on horseback, who was intimately acquainted with the country ; he had served in a local corps during the rebellion, and was extremely interesting in his recital of the resulting calamities. As we approached Kilcullen bridge, he gave us a most frightful account of its inhabitants, describing them as amongst the most disaffected people in Ireland : I was by no means disposed to doubt the fact, though it operated on my mind very differently from what he expected ; as I was more inclined to commiserate and pity, than join in reproaches.

There must, I thought, be some grievous evil at their doors, to banish men from their thresholds, and induce them to incur such imminent danger for a chance only of being relieved from its daily insupportable afflictions. I became in an instant resolved to satisfy myself of the real condition of these people ; and, as our new friend had undertaken to order breakfast, the carriage proceeded to the inn, and I walked to the nearest cabins.

Hospitality throws widely open every door in Ireland! An apology is scarcely necessary on entering any abode—the stranger is received with kindness, and made heartily welcome to the best fare that can be afforded. In the first cabin I reached, which was constructed of miserable clay daubing, I found the family gathered round a stool at breakfast; some of the party were seated, others on their knees; all applying to a wooden bowl placed on the stool filled with potatoes in their skins; but neither salt nor butter-milk attended the repast! The family consisted of a mother, three small children, and a girl about fifteen years of age. Their dress, and the interior of the cabin, bespoke the extreme of poverty. The poor woman informed me her husband was a laborer; that during the busy season of the year, whilst work was to be had, they fared tolerably well; and when they could afford butter-milk with their potatoes, they were quite content. Bread they seldom partook of; and as to meat, some of them had never tasted it; even salt, they had not always the means to procure. These melancholy facts were recited with a simplicity so natural, that it was evident not the least consciousness existed of the effect they were calculated to produce. Habit had reconciled the

98 Melancholy Effects of a redundant Population.

poor mother to her condition, and its consequent privations; but the daughter, who held down her head, seemed ashamed that their wretched state should thus be exposed to a stranger. My heart sympathised in their sufferings—their miseries, poor creatures, were too legibly written on the characters of all, to admit the reality being questioned, or to furnish a suspicion of their having arisen out of any fault or crime imputable to themselves; but, that they were the general lot of their community, arising out of the unfortunate situation of the country. I hastened to the next cabin with no hope, though with a sincere wish, of finding less to deplore. The good woman was at the door, encouraging a fine little naked boy of five years old to persevere in chasing a pig; whether from the cold, or some mixture of shame, I know not, but it required both persuasion and authority, to induce the little one's obedience. The woman, I presume, observed by my countenance that I was surprised at her admonitions, and apologized by saying, "This, Sir, is the way we take to harden our children against winter, for fuel here is a scarce article."

I had seen enough to be convinced of the melancholy consequences attendant on a re-

dundant population, and an insufficient capital to provide the individuals of it, with employment.

Sufficiently agonized with these scenes of distress, I made the best of my way to Killecullen, where our fellow-traveller became affected by the relation of what I had seen. Use blunts the feelings of humanity, when daily accustomed to sights of misery, and renders the great bulk of mankind insensible and regardless of what may be passing around them; while ignorance, interest, or prejudice, too frequently mislead the well disposed. I could not help exclaiming in the emphatical words of our acquaintance at Castlebar, "Are not the people rung by the nose, &c.?" The gentleman had the candour to acknowledge, he believed their case to be grievous and distressing.

To expect from the laborious orders the duty of loyalty, or an attachment to government under such circumstances, seems to be quite unreasonable! Prudence alone can justify to the mind of man a patient acquiescence under such a state of existence. Force may restrain the will, but cannot command the respect of the subject, and thus a state of mutual distrust and hatred must prevail.

As we approached the capital it appeared somewhat singular, that the condition of the working classes did not appear to be benefited by their proximity to its wealth; but, on the contrary, they seemed to be suffering, if possible, an increase of wretchedness. Part of the Duke of Leinster's noble estate is in this neighbourhood. Few men have the power of being so eminently useful to his fellow creatures, or of promoting, on such an extensive scale, the public welfare, and at the same time, advancing his own deserved popularity, and individual interest. The opening career of this young nobleman is highly promising. Instead of dissipating his time and fortune on frivolous and fashionable pursuits, he has entered with great energy into the promotion of the agricultural improvement of the country. The happiness and comfort which cannot fail thus to diffuse itself among the laborious classes, and spread widely through a large portion of the community, will amply repay such a devotion of time and fortune. What the late Duke of Bedford did for England, the Duke of Leinster may in a much higher degree accomplish for Ireland; because the range in the general melioration of the husbandry of the country is so much more extensive. Here abundance would soon embellish the soil, comfort would lighten the

heart, and joy brighten the eye of a depressed, desponding peasantry; with whom dissatisfaction and wretchedness would soon give place to loyalty and contentment. What glorious objects of ambition! Their present reward, affection and respect; in prospect, the gratitude and admiration of posterity.

At Killcullen bridge, the Liffy is an inconsiderable stream; the remains of monastic buildings, and of a round tower of considerable size, bespeak the former importance of this place. The old town is at the distance of half a mile from the bridge; the village consists but of a few scattered houses; the soil is rich; and though little can be said in favor of the husbandry, the crops were apparently heavy. Green crops there were none, and the clover and sown grasses were very foul. Shallow ploughing, and want of due cleaning, prevent good crops of clover, which, even without manure, would be procured, if attention were paid to deep ploughing and weeding.

The contrast between affluence and poverty in this country is matter of perpetual unpleasant observation. A noble mansion is approached by a dilapidated lodge, tenanted by poverty—it is wonderful that such incongruities can be

suffered; and not felt by those who could so easily correct them; especially when it is considered that no people on earth have a more lively sense of the misery of others, when their humanity is properly directed.

After passing three miles beyond John's Town, the whole way to Dublin is on a noble terrace; commanding a most extensive view of the county of Dublin to the right, bounded by the Wicklow mountains. The extensive buildings in Dublin, and the Phoenix Park, which is well wooded, present a prospect enriched by variety and beauty; yet our immediate approach to the metropolis was not announced either by a display of opulence in the erection of numerous villas, or a better appearance in the cabins. The lot of the lower classes in its neighbourhood does not appear by any means to be improved—the expense of fuel curtailing them of one of their most important necessities.

The suburbs present a motley mixture of riches and poverty—the handsomest villas in the midst of the poorest dwellings; and, what is most singular, opulence must have here sought for situations among dirt and wretchedness. The first and most striking objects on

entering Dublin, after being gratified with the sight of the noble rows of elms which ornament the banks of the grand canal, are the barracks to the right, and the military hospital of Kilmainham on the left. These, however, failed to inspire us with more pleasing sensations than were communicated by the barriers, erected at the time of the rebellion, which were still remaining! Whence can this arise? Can it be for the interest or the honor of any mortal to perpetuate the horror of those dreadful times, or bring to recollection events disgraceful to all parties? Lord Cornwallis's administration ought to have endeared his memory to every friend of Ireland: he suspended the reign of terror by his moderation, and restored confidence by his kindness. Happy indeed would it have been had his enlightened policy been followed up, and acted on. Time, however, has now been afforded for healing the wounds inflicted when the barriers were raised, and bringing back the people to a reliance on government. This disposition it would not be less politic than humane to foster and encourage; and lest the continuance of them should be considered as a tacit acknowledgment of a contrary belief, their removal now would surely be acceptable to the people, by whom they cannot be seen without regret, nor es-

seemed otherwise than as precautionary defences, in the event of any refusal, on the part of those by whom they were erected, of a redress of popular grievances.

The circular road which skirts the city, and precludes the necessity of passing through the old part of the town, is a great convenience, and must greatly facilitate the intercourse with the metropolis; the road, however, is too narrow, and by no means corresponds with the magnificence to which it leads. On leaving the circular road, we passed through St. Stephen's Green, which is capable of being made a noble square; in its present state it may be much objected to, but we understood a plan is in agitation that will make this a very beautiful approach. The bank, formerly the House of Parliament, is a very fine piece of architecture: opposite to this is the college.

The space between the latter and Carlisle bridge is to be cleared, so as to lay open the quay, and present a view of the custom-house and shipping. Beyond this is Sackville Street, in the centre of which is raised a pillar in commemoration of our naval hero Lord Nelson. The street is one hundred and twenty feet wide, divided into pavement and gravelled roads, and

may be compared to Portland Place. This approach is most imposing, and is not surpassed by any thing in Europe, unless it be the Strada di Toledo of Naples, or the Place de Louis XV. and Tuilleries in the opinion of some judges.

We are lodged here most comfortably, and with every accommodation. Privations, like long fasting, certainly give a relish and value to the comforts of life far beyond what those who are in the constant enjoyment of them can imagine. In elegances, Dublin may vie with most places in Europe. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER XLIV.

Dublin, Sept. 22, 1813.

MUCH as I have on many occasions lamented that my time was so circumscribed, I feel the mortification infinitely more in a spot where we shall not be able to pass more than four days, and in which, as many weeks would be requisite to pay due attention to all that is worthy of observation.

My first object of inquiry this morning was one in which I have a personal interest. The shipping and coal trade are as important to Cumberland as to Dublin. The public stores for coals are very incommodious, both as to their approach, and being nearly without any covering; than which a greater mistake cannot be made, as all inflammable substances suffer much deterioration by exposure; beside which these stores are wholly inadequate to the supply of so extensive a city as Dublin.

The trading in coals, an article on which the

comforts of so many depend, is here, as in most other places, subject to great fraud and imposition; enhancing the price to the consumer without profiting the fair trader. An act of parliament requires that the selling price should be exposed on the mast of each vessel, as also the place from which the coals were brought. The porters, to whom the buyers send their orders, lay the masters of the vessels under contribution; for while they charge the consumer with thirty shillings for a ton, equal to a London chaldron, the masters of the colliers do not, probably, receive more than twenty-eight shillings. Many attempts, on the part of the owners of the vessels, have been made to correct this abuse, but hitherto without effect: this appears extraordinary, as it should seem that the coal sellers have as direct an interest as the consumers in its removal. Great preference is given in various parts of Ireland to different coals, some choosing one sort, some another, without any known specific reason for the selection of either.

The quays, when the opening is completed from Carlisle bridge, will be above a mile in length, and as eminently remarkable as any thing of the sort in the British empire. The wet docks will be extensive, but these seem to

proceed slowly towards completion. A want of water over the bar, at the entrance of Dublin Bay, presents a formidable obstacle to its becoming a port of great trade ; it is not safe for any ships of considerable draft of water to attempt passing over the bar, even on the highest of the spring tides.

As a remedy for that which is so decidedly an impediment to the mercantile greatness of the city, an attempt has been made to create a harbour on the north side of the hill of Howth. The intention is to unite the main land with a rock at some distance from the shore ; when this shall be accomplished, it is said there will be sufficient depth of water, shelter, and other accommodations at all times, for the largest description of trading vessels. The packets, during the summer months, have been removed to Howth, by which arrangement four hours are saved in the passage. Should this project, as it is probable, be crowned with success, the trade will undergo very material changes ; and as all cannot be benefited in such extensive alterations, it is reasonable to expect that many will oppose them. On the commencement of the new harbour, the attempt was represented as chimerical, and a useless expenditure of money ; but the progress it has already made affords

reasonable ground to hope for its complete success, which, when accomplished, a canal may not unlikely be projected to communicate from Howth to Dublin.

The custom-house, which is on the north side of the river, is a prodigious pile of building, sufficiently capacious to transact the business of all Ireland. An increase, both in luxury and population, may be inferred from the augmented importation of coals during the last forty years. In the year 1772, the coals imported amounted to two hundred and eleven thousand four hundred and thirty-three tons, at a supposed cost of forty-eight thousand pounds; in the year 1812, there were imported five hundred and fifty thousand one hundred and sixty-three tons, costing above four hundred and twenty thousand pounds; still this is not one half the quantity received into the port of London. Ten years of peace would probably double the consumption of coal. A few years ago, there was scarcely a steam-engine in Ireland; recently a manufactory for their construction has been established in Dublin; the extension of trade, after a time, when once the civilized world shall be blessed with peace, must produce surprising effects in a country, so calculated as this is, for all commercial enterprises; the extent and convenience

of the port of Dublin alone are so interesting as to justify this remark, even to those who are not men of business.

The admirers of beautiful scenery will here find much to indulge in; for, excepting the bay of Naples, there is probably no prospect of the kind to compare as a rival to the bay of Dublin. The hill of Howth, forming its northern extremity, is of considerable magnitude; and rising as it does from the flat shore, which connects it with the land, renders it more conspicuous. All the way from Dublin to Howth, a distance of six miles, is very beautiful; and the whole peninsula is crowded with magnificent villas and ornamented cottages. The breadth of the bay does not exceed four miles, contracting till it terminates in the river Liffy. The Wicklow shore has quite a different character, being as bold as the other is tame: the mountains here rise to a considerable height, and terminate in a great diversity of summit, which, with the conical hills in advance from their main body, produce a singularly beautiful effect. As the whole is cultivated and crowded down to the water's edge with cabins, most of which are white-washed, the interest of the scene is greatly promoted by the general gaiety and cheerfulness thus exhibited.

Views of the Bay surpassing Expectation. 111

The city of Dublin occupies the entire extremity, or bottom of the bay. So numerous and varied are the natural productions and works of art, which are assembled in this small compass, that the attention becomes distracted. There is in this view one very agreeable peculiarity—every feature of the landscape is distinctly seen—one character pervades the whole, and no space is left for fancy to fill up—all is complete and beautiful—busy and alive! while the general bustle of commercial business pronounces it not less the residence of opulence than the happy seat where industry and productive labor love to dwell.

Prepared as I was from every account I had received of this celebrated spot, it has not only answered, but exceeded my expectations. I could have passed the whole day in contemplating the different parts of this glorious landscape, where every object successfully combines to promote a general harmony, and produce one grand exquisite effect.

I had been so fascinated with the various views of the bay, that I had lost the count of time, and did not arrive at the bank until after the time of its closing. Through the obliging attention of a namesake, Mr. Henry Curwen,

the cashier, whose meritorious conduct has raised him to an office of great trust and respectability, I had the good fortune to obtain access to every part of this noble edifice, which gave us the satisfaction of seeing and knowing that every part of its internal arrangement corresponded with what might have been expected from its outward magnificence.

The Lords' House of Parliament remains in its primitive state; the room is small, ill proportioned, and has nothing of dignity or consequence to recommend it. It is at present a receptacle for lumber: there may be those who would dare to question if it had usually been more usefully employed. I, for one, felt no regret at its metamorphose! Nor shall I ever, until the disgraceful accusation of its members having sold "their birthrights for a mess of pottage," be completely and successfully rebutted. Had I been an Irishman, I think I should have loathed the roof under which the sacrifice had been made, though, as a national benefit, I might have approved the measure: as an Englishman, my feelings impelled me from the spot with contempt and detestation!

We passed from the bank to Trinity College, which, though on a smaller scale, has some re-

semblance to its namesake at Cambridge. Our next object was the University. This establishment was projected nearly three hundred years before it was founded, during the mayoralty of Thomas Smith, in the year 1593. Its revenues, which are most ample, arise from munificent grants in the reign of Elizabeth, James, and Charles the First. The library is a splendid appendage, and is said to contain upwards of seventy thousand volumes; among which are many scarce and valuable books. The Dean, with some reluctance, was prevailed on to afford us the pleasure of inspecting it; he had taken great displeasure at some published accounts in England, and was disposed to resent the offence by excluding English visitors. A peace offering, however, was politely accepted, by my assuring him that since I had been in Ireland, my admiration might faithfully be esteemed as not inferior to his own, or the most enthusiastic lover of his country; and that should I ever be tempted to describe to the public the gratifications I had received, no discredit, by any possibility, could attach to Ireland from my observations. This assurance produced us polite attention, and we were shown whatever was considered as rare, and the most curious.

The manuscript New Testament, containing

the three disputed verses in St. John, the authority of which gave rise to so long and so obstinate a controversy, is one of the most interesting objects. Some maps of Ireland, from surveys made in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, represent the country as well wooded. This is very credible, notwithstanding its present denuded appearance; for, in spite of the western blasts, we observed a very rapid growth of the trees.

Amongst other relics, we were shown the letter of James the Second to his General at Derry, and to which I have before had occasion to advert, blaming him for allowing some of the half starved, famished inhabitants of that place to escape, and ordering him in future to prevent any one from quitting the town. It is very unfortunate for the memory of this monarch, that such a wanton proof of his inhumanity should by the care of his contemporaries have been so preserved. The chapel is spacious, and highly ornamented; the hall is capacious, lofty, and magnificent; but as a refectory, its splendid construction must ill repay the sufferings of those from cold, who are constrained to dine in it nine months in the year. Mr. Burke's portrait now occupies the place which was formerly allotted to that of Mr. Grattan. The whole

transaction relative to the destruction of the latter gentleman's picture, has fixed a stain on the University, that in our memory cannot be effaced. Such an instance of time-serving spirit would be contemptible in any body of men ; but within these walls, where learning, liberality, and an elevation of the human mind, ought to reside, the very reverse of a conduct which after ages will not less reprobate than the present, might have been expected. These will fix the dishonor where it ought to rest, and do full justice to the political character and conduct of Mr. Grattan.

We made a hasty visit to the Institute. Had time permitted, it would have afforded us ample field for indulging our curiosity in the various branches of science. Lectures are delivered here on the various branches of natural philosophy ; and a school for design also has recently been established. The mineralogical collection is extensive, and promises aid in elucidating the stratification of Ireland. It gave me much pleasure to see collected numerous specimens of its marbles. It does no credit to the good sense of a nation to prefer, on all occasions, the productions of other countries to their own, when the utility and real intrinsic value of each is nearly equal. Even admitting in point of

116 *Inspection of Curiosities at the Institute.*

beauty, the foreign marbles to have a superiority; yet those at home being Irish, and equally useful, ought to secure them a preference.

Here we were also shown a most singular model of a circular building, not long ago discovered in the county of Kerry; and I think I understood that a second had also been found in another quarter. Though somewhat differently constructed, it has much the appearance of a theatre. The seats, instead of being carried entirely round the building, are placed singly in diagonal lines, appearing like so many separate staircases, internally surrounding the whole building. There is but one entrance into the circus, which is at the bottom or ground floor of the model. This door-way by some has been offered as an argument against the design being intended for a theatre; and the comparatively few who could have had the accommodation of seats seems to corroborate this opinion: the model, however, does not enable us to form any reasonable conjecture, whether the entrance to the audience might not have been from the top. From its recent discovery, I should presume it must have been found at some depth hidden in the earth.

The Institute has an allowance of eight thou-

sand a year from government : this appropriate expenditure advances a general knowledge and taste for the arts ; it also contributes to promote many useful improvements in every branch of science. Previous to the establishment of the Farming Society in Ireland, the attention of the Institute was in a particular manner directed to objects of agriculture. All the public institutions in Ireland are on a great scale, and do credit to the national spirit and taste. As far as so cursory an inspection would enable me to form any judgment, I was much pleased with the general arrangements, and the mode of conducting, the several departments of the Institute.

The style and beauty of Dublin have greatly surpassed my expectations. Many of the streets are handsome and commodious, while the appearance of the shops is inferior to those only in London. The bridges over the Liffey are so numerous that the passage of the river through the centre of the town is attended with little inconvenience. St. Stephen's Green exceeds in size any of the squares in London ; the others are of an inferior character. There are numbers of capital houses, which are occupied at high rents. The Union for some years had the effect of reducing the value of the best re-

118 *Unfavourable Season for visiting Dublin.*

residences considerably; many of the principal inhabitants having quitted Dublin. Some of these have returned; a great number of new buildings are erecting, and the place, we were told, is as much resorted to as formerly.

Unfortunately we could not have visited Dublin at a more unfavourable season, as the courts were not sitting; the theatres not open; a great proportion of the first families absent at their country seats; and the town wearing a forlorn desolate appearance, by wanting the bustle of a great commercial city, and the display of fashion, equipage, and other indications of opulence. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER XLV.

Dublin, Sept. 23, 1815.

OUR first engagement this morning was to visit the establishment of the Farming Society of Ireland at Summer-hill; the high reputation and celebrity of which are the best evidence of the benefits derived to the country from its labors.

As a point of union connecting the landed gentry with men of science and practical knowledge, it cannot fail of producing important results, and extensively diffusing a spirit for improvement. From the parent society have sprung several provincial establishments; and, in every part of the country, efforts are making to inspire a taste for agriculture and improvement. The augmented estimation in which these are now held has advanced the character of the practical farmer, and opened to him a road not only to respectability but to public favor and celebrity: nor are these resulting advantages confined to him, but extended to all classes of meritorious laborers on the soil, not

one of whom is excluded from becoming a partaker of the honors and premiums bestowed by the institution.

Were the impediments to good husbandry in Ireland of the ordinary kind only, I should not entertain the smallest doubt that a short time would be sufficient to remove them, and place the cultivation of the country on an equality with that of England. Unfortunately, however, some are in existence of a nature not easily to be surmounted.

Want of constant employment is the primary source of all the evils. If an opportunity of being employed were daily presented to the laborious orders, some degree of industry would be excited; this would daily increase, and tend to remove much of their present apathy and discontent. Could any means be devised to give profitable activity to the rural population of Ireland, the country would soon become one of the most abundantly fertile spots on the face of the globe.*

* "No nation ever yet became industrious till the prospect of reward had sweetened the exercise of the spade, the hammer, or the hatchet. The feelings of present ill, for such is toil, must be overbalanced by the hope of future good, else no man will work."

Campbell's Strictures on Irish History.

to whom other Employment should be given. 121

To effect so desirable an alteration a total change must be induced in the habits and prejudices of the laboring people, whose pride, it is much to be feared, would greatly militate against any reform that should dispossess them, as the wretched occupants, of their miserable holdings, and give them the happiness and independency of comfortable laborers; it would, in their estimation, be a depression in the scale of society that no future prospects or anticipations of good would be capable of reconciling to them. The multitudes now spreading over the face of the country should, by manufactures and trade, be seduced, as it were, into towns; where new habits would be acquired, and the increase of wages would create a desire for better food and its natural accompaniments. The potatoe, which, in some points of view, may justly be regarded as one of the greatest blessings to our species, is capable of operating the greatest calamities, when it exclusively furnishes the food on which a community is content to exist; for as the cultivation of a single statute acre may successfully and easily be attended to by one individual, and as its produce on an average would give food for at least ten persons the year round, at seven pounds each per day, which may be considered as an abundant allowance; what chance is

122 *Agriculture not a sufficient Employment.*

there for manual exertions in such a society? among whom a patrimonial aversion to labor, and an habitual attachment to idleness, are paramount to every other consideration.

Although I have no means of ascertaining the fact with accuracy, I am inclined to believe, that an acre of potatoes will furnish a greater supply of food than one of rice.

Admitting the agriculture of the country should be so far improved as to require six persons for the cultivation of every hundred acres; in this case, one fifth of the people only could thus find employment, if even the whole surface were under the plough; but, in all probability, one third of it would be found to be bog, turf, mountain, and waste.

The wonderful fertility of the soil, paradoxical as it may appear, has a contrary effect in Ireland to that of stimulating the husbandman, either to labor on it, or support it with manure. The extreme love of ease and pleasurable modes of passing away time, renders the farmer disinclined to do either; for, without any pains on his part, he is sure of an abundant crop; and, as his indulging in the habits of his forefathers is of more consequence

to him than providing for his children; he becomes careless as to both. The numerous competitors for small portions of land produce the present exorbitant rents, and consequently induce the subdivision of estates *ad infinitum*; and as the object of a young Irish couple is not to *live*, but *exist* only, the country is become overloaded with a useless population, possessing so little capital as seldom to exceed the half year's rent which usually is in arrear. The prodigious high price of grain for the last few years has with difficulty enabled the occupiers to pay these heavy demands to their landlords. Privations and potatoes only could have furnished the means.

The Farming Society have an allowance from the state of five thousand pounds a year, and an annual subscription is paid by the members in aid of the funds. The establishment at Summer-hill is on an extensive plan for all kinds of improvements; among which is a manufactory for the most approved species of farming implements, which are here sold at reduced prices to practical persons. The society has an experimental farm about five miles from Dublin at Ballynasloe, where they have a handsome house, with a most commodious yard for the reception of prize cattle. The meetings in

the spring are held in Dublin, in the autumn, at Ballynasloe.

The premiums annually distributed by the society are very numerous; and aid from their funds is also extended to the different provincial societies; by which means, though much distributed, each becomes identified with the agriculture of the whole country, while the parent establishment is enabled to direct their attention to those practices which are of the most important consideration.

These valuable exertions have already been rewarded by great improvement in the breed and appearance of the cattle. In most similar establishments, agriculture takes the lead of live stock; here it is wisely reversed. Great attention is paid to a proper selection in breeding, the beneficial consequences of which must soon be felt in every quarter. Instead of confining, by means of high prices, the prime stock to a few graziers, the best bulls are here open to the use of every one on a trifling payment.

The Right Hon. John Foster is the president; Mr. Wynne, and many other experienced and spirited agriculturists, form the committee;

Mr. Dix and the Rev. — Radcliffe are secretaries, and both gentlemen are highly qualified for the discharge of the office which each has undertaken.

I was much gratified and pleased with the general arrangements, and all that I saw ; but particularly with the good sense and spirit with which the whole business is conducted.

Within a few doors of the society's house is the extensive coach manufactory belonging to Mr. Hutton, who gives employment to more than five hundred people. The premises are very extensive, and every branch of the business is conducted under Mr. Hutton's own personal inspection. I was particularly struck with the care and attention paid here to the seasoning of the wood made use of. In point of execution, the work is no where exceeded in London: the order and regularity with which so large a concern is conducted I beheld with great pleasure. The best constructed jaunting car is a commodious vehicle ; I have often, however, lamented the sufferings of the poor horse, when dragging one of them at a great pace with five or six persons.

We next made a circuit through the principal

squares and streets, and arrived before the castle at the moment of relieving guard, which is here done at five in the afternoon. The general remark of foreigners "that our palaces are hospitals, and our hospitals palaces," applies with all its significance to Dublin Castle, the architecture of which is mean; and from every thing indicated by its exterior, I should be led to imagine the apartments within are by no means suitable to the rank and station of a Lord Lieutenant. The chapel, which is a modern building, seems to be a highly finished piece of Gothic architecture.

The unceasing display of military parade gives Dublin the air of a garrison town. As the means of national defence I honor the profession of arms; but when soldiers become the conservators of civil authority, and the executors of the law, I deplore the wretched policy that renders their aid permanently requisite; and, as a British subject, view them as bayoneted constables with a constitutional jealousy.

Most ardently do I wish the civil power in Ireland may be rendered competent to the general administration of justice, the laws, and the preservation of order; and that our gallant

army may be exonerated from a service as repugnant to their martial characters as to their domestic feelings.

We were not able to reach the establishment of the Linen Board. This society yearly distributes among the working classes a number of spinning wheels and looms; and the society also charges itself with the importation of foreign flax or linseed, that which is raised in Ireland being supposed to produce inferior plants. The linen trade has decreased of late years more than a million and half in value. This in some measure has been attributed to a defective manufacture. Great complaints are made of the interference of German cloth with the Irish market, arising, most probably, from some superiority in those fabrics; but as the linen business from the growth of the flax plant, through all its stages, to the perfect manufacture of the linen, has been so long pursued in Ireland as to become the principal occupation of the people, it would be extremely impolitic indeed, in a country where employment is so scarce and so desirable, to suffer a rivalry in its staple commodity by the introduction of foreign productions. If the German linens be entitled to a preference, the cause of such preference ought to be ascertained, and no pains

should be spared to correct the defect in the Irish manufacture. The application of chemical aids in bleaching, principally for the purpose of discharging a stain acquired by the fibres in the process of water steeping, may possibly be injurious to its strength. Could a cheap and expeditious mode be discovered for obtaining the flax from the plant without its undergoing the present tedious and wasteful process of steeping, it would be an incalculable benefit to Ireland.

We perceived a great disposition in every part of the country to extend this business. Formerly the linen trade was almost exclusively confined to the northern counties ; but you may perhaps recollect that I remarked with pleasure an expansion of its growth as far south as the county of Kerry.

The foundling hospital here for the reception of children is on a great scale, though the policy and even propriety of the institution are highly questionable. The view with which it was founded, unquestionably, was the preservation of helpless human beings ; but it admits of very great doubt, whether this benevolent end has been promoted. Much discussion has taken place on the state and general conduct of the

charity, which I regret it was not in my power to examine. If little or no positive good has arisen, much national injury, in a moral point of light, may have been sustained. Children are brought from all quarters of the country to the hospital, and no inquiries are made. There is a box on the outside of a window to receive them, and a bell above it; this is rung, and a person in attendance receives the infant. A register is kept for the purpose of answering subsequent inquiries, in which the time of receiving the child, and any permanent marks it may happen to have about it, are entered; and there are always a number of wet nurses in attendance. The practice of those who wish to send a child from the country, is to apply to the clergyman, with whom a certain sum is deposited by the person who undertakes to deliver the child to the institution; and on a receipt being produced of the faithful discharge of this duty, the clergyman returns the money to the depositing party. Old women are found who undertake this employment; but as the little innocents are conveyed to Dublin in all seasons, numbers, I should apprehend, must perish on their journey. At a certain age the foundlings are placed out with poor families about Dublin; and on annually exhibiting the child, the undertaking parties become entitled to the stipend

130 *Hospitals for the Reception of the Sick.*

for its maintenance. The representation of the mortality within the walls of the institution, and afterwards, displays a shocking picture of the waste of human life; pains have been taken by those who are responsible to rebut the accusation; and, as I speak from hearsay only, I sincerely hope the account may be exaggerated.

There are several hospitals for the reception of the sick, said to be well conducted, and to afford essential relief to those, otherwise incapable of obtaining medical assistance.

The hour was so late before we concluded our peregrinations in the new part of the town, that we had not time to reach the city. A description of the scenes of misery to be met with in some part of it, exceed any thing that can be imagined. Poverty, disease, and wretchedness, exist in every great town; but in Dublin the misery is indescribable. An opinion, however, formed of the morals of a great people, from even numerous specimens of such vitiated conduct and mendicancy, would be highly erroneous. Would it be just that the virtue, happiness, and morality of Great Britain, should be ascertained by the manners of Billingsgate, St. Giles's, or

similar resorts of the unworthy, in any of our great manufacturing towns?

The Phoenix Park is not less a delightful outlet to the inhabitants than a superb appendage to the city. The plantations and embellishments were principally executed in Lord Chesterfield's administration, whose memory is deservedly held in high estimation. Were we to judge from the manner in which several Lords Lieutenants of the last century have been addressed on their departure, we should be justified in believing that no people were ever so fortunate in the wisdom, intelligence, patriotism, and virtue, of their chief magistrates. A collection of their farewell addresses would furnish a lamentable specimen of the sacrifices into which men may be betrayed by self-interest. Historians in after times will find but slender materials of excellence on which such gross and unfounded adulation can be warranted.

By Dr. Whitelaw's enumeration of the inhabitants in the year 1798, it appears that Dublin at that time contained one hundred and thirty-four thousand eight hundred and forty-four souls; but by a more recent census the population amounted to one hundred

and fifty thousand seven hundred and fifty-one.

The public vehicles that ply in the streets are hackney coaches, jingles, and jaunting cars. The two latter, not long ago, afforded a subject of some pleasantry.—The honour of knighthood was conferred by a former Lord Lieutenant on two individuals renowned for merit in different pursuits—the one celebrated for his musical talents—the other as the author of numerous travels.—Pat distinguished the former by the name of *jingle*, the latter by that of *jaunting car*.—The Irish, even in the lower rank, on giving expression to first impressions are frequently witty; but as judgment is a second operation of the mind, and as they never think twice, they become intoxicated with their joke, and abide by the immediate impulse of the moment, though the exercise of a second thought would frequently teach them their error: this is never resorted to, and we had frequent opportunities of noticing the point, and sometimes the severity of a repartee, but always found the receiving party more inclined to laugh the matter off, than to make a vindictive, or even an ill-humored reply.

The removal of the Parliament was, in the

Removal of Parliament at first a great Loss. 133

first instance, a great loss to Dublin ; but those most adverse to the measure, at the time, now admit that the consequences have proved less injurious than were expected—trade is reviving, and has increased ; and it is an agreed opinion, that in a short time it will more than compensate a loss which was considered as ruinous to its prosperity.

Generally speaking, the society of Dublin is excellent : the seat of Government, the university, the courts of law, and a large military establishment, induce great numbers to make it their constant residence.

You cannot expect, from the slight view I have been able to take of Dublin, more than a very imperfect sketch of the many interesting objects which this city presents ; many have been only partially seen, while others have been entirely overlooked ; but the length of this letter manifests that, amid all its claims on my attention, you cannot be forgotten. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER XLVI.

Dublin, Sept. 24, 1813.

THE kind attention of the Bishop of Meath procured us the acquaintance of a gentleman extensively engaged in the management of some of the first estates in Ireland. Latterly the agency business of landed property has been undertaken by men of talent and character; the consequences of which, as might be expected, are beneficial to all parties; for while fair dealing is observed towards the tenant, the strictest justice is done to the proprietor.

Such, however, is the competition for small farms and holdings, and so completely do the applicants lose sight of their true value, in their extreme solicitude for the occupation of them, that the greatest difficulty is frequently imposed on a conscientious agent in his election of a tenant. His own opinion—his suspicions—nay, his individual conviction of the highest bidder, being the most ineligible occupier, will scarcely

justify his rejection of him, not only as it respects the immediate apparent interest of his employer, but the imputation which he may incur of being charged with bribery, on accepting an inferior rent. The disappointed surmises of the candidate soon reach the proprietor; and unless he happen to entertain just confidence in the rectitude of his agent, or be a man of business, it would be a difficult task on the part of the agent to convince him, that the more considerable offer was not most to his advantage. Hence the refusal of the wildest proposal is hazarding a suspicion of sinister motives, and is the great evil attending the management, by men of character, of estates belonging to proprietors who are either above, or below, paying attention to their own interests themselves.

The real substantial interests of the tenant and the landlord, among honest men, are the same. Moderate rents, under appropriate terms, and fair covenants, are secured in their payment from the tenant, and in the progressive improvement to the estate of the landlord. Unreasonable rents are destructive of the tenant's prosperity!—ruinous to his capital, and entail a double loss on the landlord; first, by a defalcation of rent; and, secondly, in the deterioration of his property.

136 *Letting of Farms by private Auction*

For the purpose of securing to the proprietor his rent, in many instances the agent guarantees the amount, on an allowance of a certain poundage. Under this condition, rents too high subject them undoubtedly to some risk of loss.

The practice of letting estates by tickets, or sealed tender, has prevailed to a considerable extent in many parts of England, but it has been highly injurious to various properties. Adventurers, as destitute of sufficient capital as of experience, have thus been enabled to dispossess old tenants; and most commonly, after a very short occupation, the farms have been to be re-let; on which occasions they have frequently been hired under their true annual value.

This system exhibits great want of liberality, and must have originated in ignorance, and been adopted by idleness. Great commercial companies—opulent merchants, and others as wholly unacquainted with the relative value of their estates to an occupier, as are their confidential professional friends sitting in chambers of the inns of court, were easily induced, because it saved them trouble, to subscribe to this summary mode of proceeding.

The latter parties would no doubt gladly avail themselves of this acquiescence, in their new projected species of auction, it being the best covering for the absence of that knowledge of rural affairs, in which it cannot be expected professional men should be so accurately educated as to decide justly between parties of such opposite interests; and whilst a private auction relieved them from all responsibility, it had the further recommendation of passing matters of great concern through their offices without perplexity, to completion, and without risking any impeachment of their judgment. Should my suggestions, as to the origin of these auctions in obscurity, serve as a check to this ungenerous mode of proceeding, the public, by possibility, may be benefited.

Mr. Roper, from whom we obtained much important information respecting the value of Irish estates, occupies the beautiful mansion of Ely Place, three miles from Dublin, at the foot of the Wicklow mountains. From the park we commanded many charming views of the city and bay of Dublin.

The opinion I had formed, of land letting considerably higher in Ireland than in England, receives daily confirmation; even after every

allowance is made for the exemption of the former from poor's rates and taxes. The county rates and repairs, however, must be acknowledged as weighty charges on the Irish tenant, whose account with his landlord is a running one, and the balance against him forms, in general, the principal part of his capital. The regularity in payment of rents to the English landlord has a decided advantage, and is no small argument in favor of a substantial tenantry.

On our return to Dublin this morning, we saw a fine pasture field completely overrun with docks and seeded ragwort; on expressing our astonishment to Mr. Roper, he asked what we might suppose to be the rent. Accustomed to hear of six, eight, and ten pounds per acre, in spite of its extremely neglected state, I mentioned the latter sum. Erroneous conjecture! it was let at the rate of seventeen pounds per acre! How is it possible, under any circumstances of luxuriant produce, that such rents can be paid? The cow keepers in London do not pay more than about twelve pounds, or the Battersea gardeners more than about fifteen pounds the acre: at least I never heard of higher rents near our metropolis. Hard by this was a field of clover standing for seed, which also bore so

complete a crop of docks that woe to the unfortunate purchasers of the produce.

Mr. Commissioner Wynne, brother to the proprietor of Haslewood, has a charming villa at Rathmines. He corroborated Mr. Roper's account of land letting even for twenty pounds an acre in that neighbourhood. This gentleman has paid particular attention to the short horned breed of cattle, some specimens of which, that came under our observation, claimed kindred with the best Durham breed.

In passing through Mr. Wynne's grounds, we had the pleasure of meeting the younger branches of the family, their lovely healthy appearance made it impossible silently and indifferently to pass them by. On our inquiring of one of the female attendants the number of the family, she replied with great naiveté, "There are only eight, Sir."—In many other instances we have noticed it as a prevailing opinion, that any number of children in a family under ten, or a dozen, is below the scale of expectancy.

The most adverse sensations are in this country exerted at the same instant, so closely are opposites associated! Whilst the eye is invited

140 *Apparent beneficial Effects of the Union.*

to splendor and magnificence, the heart recoils from the most repulsive poverty. The seats of opulence, and the cabins of indigence, are so mixed and huddled together, that they force on the mind a perpetual combat of feeling! London and Dublin differ materially in this respect. In the former, the different gradations in society have each an appropriate station—here, the meanest mechanic is found existing in streets, where the highest ranks luxuriantly live. Dublin perhaps equals London in objects of splendor; but it cannot compete with it in point of comfort; nor can, I believe, any other place in the habitable world.

We had been put to such inconvenience for change, that I resolved to avail myself of Mr. Henry Curwen's polite offer of a quantity of silver. Those who visit this country should be provided with Bank of Ireland paper, as the local notes have a limited circulation, and those of the Bank of England are distrusted, in the apprehension of their being forged.

The beneficial affects arising out of the Union are now beginning to appear; the exchange with England, till within these few months, has been constantly against this country; at this moment it is five per cent in its favor. The

superior rate of interest in Ireland, in consequence of a deficiency of capital, is a great check to all commercial pursuits.

Mr. Radcliffe obligingly offered to take me to Howth; and it was agreed we should breakfast with Mr. Hutton, at whose manufactory we had been so highly gratified, and who, on a small scale, is an excellent farmer. From Mr. Hutton's we paid a visit to Mr. Sayer, of Green Road, who has a considerable farm, and soils to a great extent. Twenty head of cattle, of different ages, were here soiled from the 3d of May to the 8th of September on the produce of seventeen acres of clover and meadow land. Mr. Sayer's green crops, for Ireland, were magnificent: he had nearly twenty acres of turnips, of which half the quantity were Swedes, thirty acres of potatoes, as many of beans, ten acres of rape, and three of mangel wurzel, which, with the clover, amounted to seventy-six acres of green crops, and comprehended nearly one third of the farm; beside which, there were forty-two acres of wheat, and twenty-two acres of oats. The land had been greatly exhausted at the time Mr. Sayer commenced his able operations. The attention now bestowed to the cleaning of the land will soon bring it

142 Inspection of Mr. Sayer's Farm at Green Road.

into the highest order, when it must become an object of great interest to the agriculturist. This is infinitely the best specimen of farming I had yet seen in Ireland. We had here a further evidence of the fertility of the soil. The preparation for the bean crop, which, considering it was raised without manure, was a very fair one, had been, twice ploughing, once harrowing, and a little picking or weeding. These operations were considered as sufficient, not only to obtain an average crop of beans, which the result justified, but ample to ensure afterwards a good crop of wheat. Hoeing of turnips is little understood; the earth is neither cleansed from the roots of the plant, nor are they set out at a sufficient distance from each other. I could not resist borrowing a hoe from one of the people at work, and giving them an example of the manner in which turnip hoeing should be executed: my attempt created much surprise, and satisfied the laborers as to one point only, that it was a wanton waste of the crop. I pressed the bailiff to proceed in the same way with one stich only, that he might hereafter be enabled to judge which was the best method. I did not measure the blade or edge of the hoe in use; but as a width of ten inches is not considered too much in the best

cultivated parts of Norfolk and Suffolk, I am persuaded they could not be of this description.

Mr. Sayer has a very good stock of Devonshire cattle and South Down sheep: his attention was directed to the crossing of the latter with the Merino; but as the experiment has been made so fully and accurately, and has so completely failed, at Holkham, I was concerned to see him engaged in an inexpedient measure.

A dairy, on the soiling system, might be made highly profitable. The distance of Mr. Sayer's farm is within reach for supplying Dublin, where new milk sells at four-pence the quart.

The rents paid for land are incredible! Mr. Talbot has ground let, for the purpose of grazing, at the enormous sum of twenty pounds an acre.

The obliging attention of Mr. Radcliffe procured me the pleasure of inspecting the ancient and celebrated castle of Malahide, the seat of Colonel Talbot, built in the reign of Henry the Second. It is placed nearly in the centre of an isthmus of about three miles in breadth, which

unites the promontory of Howth to the main land. The site of the castle is most happily chosen both for beauty and defence; the edifice is a square building of three stories; to the west and south, it commands Howth—Dublin Bay and the Wicklow mountains in the back ground. To the north St. George's Channel, the lands of Lamboy, and Ireland's Eye. The castle, which is surrounded by some very fine timber, has a basement story which is entirely arched, and appropriated to offices, whence a spacious stone stair-case leads to the upper rooms. The first of which, a principal apartment, remains in the ancient state; it is wainscoted with oak, ornamented with much carving tolerably well executed; one compartment over the chimney-piece is of admirable workmanship, and must, I should conceive, be of more modern date than the rest.

There is something in objects of acknowledged and manifest antiquity that never fails to inspire respect. The lapse of years contrasts eternity with our transient abode upon earth! What we admire to day, millions have done homage to before us, and probably millions will continue so to do when we are gone and forgotten! The mock antique on the contrary, stamped with the architect's impression of yes-

terday, has a direct opposite effect ; provoking smiles by no means complimentary to the profundity of such Gothic fabricators.

The saloon adjoining to this fine specimen of ancient magnificence, is a noble spacious apartment fitted up in a handsome plain style, and adorned with a number of good paintings, among the most remarkable of which are some portraits by Sir Peter Lely, in his best style. The gloom of the former apartment, contrasted with the gaiety of this, produced a pleasing effect ; our view from the upper story we considered to be unrivalled.

An accident befalling one of our horses unfortunately detained us some time, and rendered it wholly impossible to reach Howth—this, on many accounts, was a great mortification. Personally I feel to have great interest in the improvements carrying on there, as likely to be of importance to the prosperity of Cumberland. In all public works the Irish legislature has displayed great magnificence ; the operations both of nature and of art appear at Howth to be on a great scale. Admitting the pier to be completed, snips of any draught of water will, at all times of tide, find security. In gales of wind from the southward, our coal

ships are compelled at all hazards to cross the bar, for the purpose of avoiding a lee-shore, there being no place to which they can run for safety. Numerous accidents have consequently happened, and many lives been lost, with much property. The most sanguine hopes are entertained by many, of the successful completion of the plan ; but as the general opinion is frequently directed by the artifices of interested persons, it is not surprising that the popular opinion should not be in its favor. Many individuals cannot—still more will not, be at the fatigue of judging for themselves. I recollect an instance where the enlargement of a harbour was opposed by all the seafaring people ; fortunately their opposition was unavailing, and in a few years afterwards there was not a nautical or other person conversant with the port, who did not acknowledge it to be the greatest improvement that could have been effected.

Mr. Foster, to whom the greatest praise is due for his laborious exertions in promoting this undertaking, will, I sincerely hope, long live to receive the tribute of public gratitude to which he is so justly entitled.

An attempt even to notice all the splendid residences, and highly ornamented villas, which

we have seen in the course of this day's circuit of thirty miles, would fill a volume. Many of the gentlemen's seats and villas appeared to me elegant, and extremely well kept: good and bad taste, however, are found blended so often together, that those who, depending on others, venture on an extensive scale of decoration must always hazard much; in exemplification of which, I might refer to the late Marquis of Lansdowne's house in Berkeley-Square. The lower suite of apartments were finished by Mr. Adam, and adorned with all the riches of Herculeum—the expense prodigious. Public admiration, as is not unfrequently the case, was in the exact proportion to the cost. A few years afterwards, the Marquis fitted up the upper suite of rooms in a style as remarkable for simplicity, as the other was the reverse of it,—the effect left no doubt to which the palm of good taste belonged. Simplicity rarely offends, whilst cumbrous ornament oppresses and fatigues.

/ Merino, the seat of the late Lord Charlemont, is very beautifully situated, commanding a most interesting view of Dublin, of its bay, and of the mountains of Wicklow. The drive by the side of the bay presents a landscape of perpetual change and enchantment.

148 *Artifice in loading Hay and Straw.*

On passing through the streets early this morning, we met a number of Irish cars bringing in hay, but loaded in so extraordinary a manner, that I should have thought it a contest for superiority in slovenliness. My companion was much amused with my surprise, and explained that it was mere trick which produced this apparent disorder. The cars were compelled to bring in forty stone—this strange mode of dressing up the load was intended to give an appearance of increased bulk, and induce the buyer to believe it exceeded the stipulated weight. The same artifice was practised with straw. It is alleged that this is one reason for the farmer's decided preference of the Irish car; and if the fact be capable of proof, the grounds of the partiality are as defective as the merit of the vehicle. The hay which comes into Dublin, like that which we have hitherto met with, is soft, owing, as I have before observed, to the manner in which it is treated after the grass is mown; we have seen very few samples of good hay in the whole circuit we have yet made.

Amongst the regrets which I shall never cease to feel is the omission of seeing the cathedral of St. Patrick, and the edifice perpetuating the memory of its patriotic Dean, which is said

to possess considerable merit as a piece of sculpture. As the zealous—the sincere friend to his country, I should have been most happy to have contemplated his monument, had it been ever so homely! Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER XLVII.

Dublin, Sept. 24, 1813.

OUR setting out having been delayed some hours by an accident affords me an opportunity of again addressing you from the metropolis.

From every account I had heard of Dublin, I was prepared to expect much inconvenience from the common beggars in the streets: how it has happened I cannot tell, but we certainly have had but little to complain of in this respect. Possibly these itinerants imitate their superiors, and migrate during summer, or that the facility of obtaining work during the time of harvest, renders the precarious mode of procuring a subsistence by begging unnecessary.

Most of the writers on the state of Ireland agree in representing the protestant inhabitants as more industrious than the catholic. I admit the fact, but I must deny the inferences attempted to be drawn from it. Religious prejudices having shut the catholic out of divers

sources of employment, he has become chained as it were to the spot where first he drew his breath, and is compelled there to lead a vegetative life; the difficulties which surround him exclude all hope of bettering his condition, which he daily observes animating his protestant brethren. At an early age the paternal roof ceases to afford the wonted shelter and support: narrowed in his present views, and cut off from all prospective expectation, the immediate object of his senses is a wife—his future happiness a cabin. Here an additional tie is contracted to bind him to the sod at his door; he becomes content to exist, and be idle. Justly to charge the laborious orders with idleness generally, as their characteristic, it would first be necessary to show that industry is an innate principle of action—on the contrary it is created by capital—nursed by example, and matured by habit. The activity of the most busy scene is not imputable to any superior energy in the minds of the respective individuals, but may be referred to the existing cause of genius combined with enterprise and capital, diffusing a stimulus, that, not unlike the glorious presence of the sun, spreads widely round, and from a puny beginning soon becomes no less respectable in its influence, than in its extended blessings to the human race. It would also be

152 *Labor of Agriculture done by married Men.*

necessary to show that when the Irish have it in their power to labor, they idly refuse to work. To be able to perform a fair day's work, men must have been in the habit of labor: many of the Irish, during their lives, have had no opportunity of being constantly employed, and from the want of muscular powers produced by use, they are at first unequal to the continued exertion of a complete day's labor. Practice, and not inclination, is alone wanting to make such parties equal as workmen to their associates. The numerous instances, which for years have fallen under my own observation, justify me in stating, that on their first arrival from their own country, they cannot easily forget the long-handled shovel, and the lay, in the application of which they retain an erect posture; yet a short time is sufficient to make most of them expert laborers on the surface, as well as good miners under ground, with the tools of the country.

Agricultural labor, which is the great source of occupation in Ireland, is, as I have mentioned in a former letter, almost exclusively performed by the married men, because it becomes a sort of barter between them and their employers; and the value of it, instead of being paid in money, is set against rent and some

little produce. Supposing that in England there be required two and an half persons for the cultivation of every hundred acres—that twenty millions are there under tillage, and that four-fifths of the servants are unmarried persons of both sexes; it would follow that there are two millions of situations open to the rising population. Ireland, containing eighteen millions of acres, with probably ten in cultivation, does not employ, of unmarried servants, more than two to five hundred acres, or about four thousand single persons. This is a most serious evil, and has its origin in the subdivision of the land. The minute distribution of property among tenants without capital, cannot contribute either to general prosperity or happiness. To be enabled to pay the enormous rents, which competition in the laborious orders from time to time occasions, they are perpetually struggling with difficulties, and submitting to privations, far greater than are endured by the working classes in any other part of the empire, and to which, as rational beings, they ought not to be subjected.

Adverting to the few sources of employment, and the little excitement in the catholics to industry, it must be recollected, that the nobility, clergy, army, and all official persons, com-

154 *Evil of encouraging Settlers on Estates.*

prehend, as a part of the aggregate, a large portion of the wealth of the country. I think it probable that the number of servants in these classes are in a ratio directly opposite to that of the number employed by persons of the catholic persuasion. All power and patronage, all the subordinate offices of the state, are filled by protestants, whilst the army and navy, in a high degree, contribute to relieve that community from all surplus in its population—not only by the bright, though sometimes delusive colourings of hope, which encourage the son to challenge the path his father has successfully trodden; but to break through a spell, which otherwise, like their catholic neighbours, would rivet them to home.

The landed proprietors in various parts of Ireland have also contributed to augment the evil by encouraging settlers on their estates, with a view to advance their annual rental, or with a desire to obtain influence at the elections.

Population is unquestionably rich when duly restricted, and when proportionate to the ability possessed of giving employment. But when these essentials are wanting, the greater part of its members become drones in the hive;

consuming the honey which they can contribute nothing in acquiring. Satisfied as I am, that catholicism does not preclude, nor is any impediment to industry, where exertion prevails, I have often lamented the extreme ignorance and bigotry of many of the lower Irish with whom I have met. Few indeed of the parties who have come under my notice could either read or write; and though great numbers became resident at Workington, such was their poverty, that, until assistance was afforded by the liberality of the town, they had no place of worship. Since the catholic chapel has been built, the happy consequences resulting from it have been truly gratifying: as order and good behaviour speedily distinguished the characters of those, whose former conduct had been notoriously the reverse.

In the contemplation of so important a public question, as by what means can the sad condition of the lower Irish be improved, we may be assured that neither from any defect in the corporeal powers of the people, nor from their religious persuasions, can any impediment arise.

The experiment made at Workington, and, doubtless, were they sought for, many others

equally satisfactory would appear, serves to show, that after all that has been said and written on this most interesting subject, there is but one mean by which so large a proportion of our fellow subjects can be rescued from a state of wretchedness, as disgraceful to the policy of Ireland, as it is derogatory to the government of the British empire. The present moment is certainly not a propitious one for entering on any direct plan to effect this most desirable end; but in the event of a happy termination of the present universal contest, when the capital which is now engaged in objects of national warfare shall cease to be demanded, and shall wait the enterprise of agriculture, manufactures, commerce, and the peaceful arts of the country—then will the happy period arrive, when the miseries of the Irish peasantry may all be forgotten in their constant employment.

Blind indeed must be that prejudiced individual, who for a moment could doubt the unlimited felicity which such a change would confer on myriads of our fellow creatures, and on the national honor and prosperity! Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER XLVIII.

Ardbracken, Sept. 25, 1813.

OUR road to Woodlands, the seat of Mr. White, took us through the Phoenix Park. A question has arisen as to the most appropriate spot for the erection of a triumphal arch to commemorate the victories of Lord Wellington. Such objects have a double effect; first, to discharge a debt of gratitude due from the present generation—secondly, to inspire future times with admiration of superior military talents, and thus to generate a spirit of heroism. With this view and these hopes, a site ought to be chosen where it may bring the edifice as much as possible within the constant observation of those engaged in warlike pursuits. The rising ground in the Phoenix Park appears to be well adapted for the purpose. Handsome as Lord Nelson's pillar certainly is, it is not in its proper situation in Sackville-street. The hill of Howth would have been more in character; every vessel visiting the port would then have

158 *View of Dublin from Phoenix Park.*

had an opportunity of paying the tribute of admiration to the memory of that gallant hero.

From the Phoenix Park is obtained a grand and extensive view of Dublin ; and, taking it altogether, it has few if any rivals in point of prospect.

The road to Lucan possesses little beauty—the town still less. Here we crossed the Liffey. A handsome bridge of one arch, over it, is just completed. The banks of the river are beautiful, and finely wooded.

We had the good fortune to overtake a gentleman who conducted us through Mr. White's improvements ; the grounds are very picturesque, and are adorned with a profusion of fine timber. The house is Gothic, and when completed will be a most splendid residence. The proprietor of this estate affords further proof of what may be accomplished in this country by industry and ability—by his own efforts and merits he has acquired a very large landed property. On leaving Woodland this morning we saw a number of handsome villas, and the grand canal which passes within a mile of Mr. White's domain.

To Donsery, nine miles, the country is very flat, and the soil of a strong quality. Great numbers of persons were busily employed in getting their wheat crops into the ground. Early sowing on cold lands is assuredly an advantageous practice. Great pains appeared to be bestowed in cleaning and keeping the furrows open; the long-handled shovel answers well for this purpose, as it enables the workman to spread what is taken out equally over the ridge. In some instances we observed the space intended for the furrow left unploughed, in order to give the lands on each side a greater covering.

Several yokes of oxen were working four in a plough; each pair had a driver, who, loaded with a trusty, and armed with a ponderous shelala, made a grotesque appearance. How the extreme absurdity of such an equipment should fail of provoking the derision of a people so alive to ridicule is my astonishment! If the poor beasts groaned under the heavy weight they had to drag, well might their conductors under their cumbrous appointments. Although the practice on reflection occasioned very different feelings, yet at the moment it was impossible to repress a laugh. How comes it

about, that no one corrects such evident absurdities, and sets a better example? All suffer by it. General ignorance is the only apology for its continuance. I know from experience the difficulty of dissuading an Irishman—yet laughing at him has never failed to carry the point of laying aside his trusty.

I was led to hope we were now approaching a country where we should be gratified with the sight of some good farming. Meath and West Meath are considered to be among the best cultivated counties in Ireland. Limestone gravel pervades the greater part of both, and is a valuable application to the soil, which is of a strong nature. Clayey soils are capable of being made very productive by capital, but suit not the little farmer in needy circumstances.

I have found much difficulty in comprehending what I hear of the produce per acre. It is stated by the barrel of one hundred weight, and is certainly the most accurate mode of ascertaining the value of a crop of grain. The produce of the land is here generally below what it ought to be under a good system of management; but when insufficient labor and manure bestowed upon it are taken into consideration,

it is considerable. Very little grain remains uncut; so early a harvest has not occurred for many years.

The farms are said to be larger here than in most districts. All the farming operations, however, appeared to be executed in a slovenly manner, especially those of stacking and sowing the crops, which must subject the tenants to very serious loss. The rent of the land is from two to three pounds per acre. The fences, which are mostly naked banks without thorns or furze, are very insufficient. The Irish car seems to be almost the only vehicle in use; and while the cabins composed of clay have a most miserable appearance, the high price of fuel contributes greatly to the hardships of their wretched occupiers. Women and children were observed to be employed in pulling up weeds, and drying them for firing; they are glad to collect stubble, or any thing else that may create a momentary warmth. Let the luxuriance of the soil be ever so great, it affords no counterpoise in favor of the cottier, against the benumbing effects of cold. Here population is not entirely in the ratio of food only—but in that of food and fuel.

We visited a cabin in the neighbourhood of

162 *Description of a Cottier's Family at Dinner.*

Nayan, about four o'clock, and found the family at dinner. The party consisted of a man, his wife, and seven children. Potatoes, their only fare, were served in a wooden bowl on a stool; the elder children ate with their parents, the younger feasted out of an iron pot on the floor. Appetite seemed to give a relish to the food, while a small jug of butter-milk was reserved to crown and complete the repast. In reply to some inquiries I made as to his wages, the poor fellow observed, "Our fare is well enough, and satisfies us all; my only concern is, that I cannot earn sufficient to cover the nakedness of these poor children; could I clothe them, I should be happy!" The whole family, it is true, was indeed in a most ragged condition—pity it should be so! It is not in appearance only they suffer, but real misery must be endured by each individual, from the severity of cold. By the aid of his pig, and what manure the children could collect from the road, he was annually enabled to plant about a rood of potatoes, for which he paid after the rate of five pounds an acre for the land; but when manure is furnished by the landlord, the rent is doubled.

The hopeless despondency which seemed to pervade the hearts of this poor family, spoke in

most emphatic, though painful language, to our feelings—deeply is their lot to be lamented, and the more as it arises out of circumstances they have neither ability to correct, nor power to control, and which there is little reason to hope can be easily remedied.

It has been the fashion to impute all evil to the state, and to look for all good from that source. Doubtless there is much to condemn in the mistaken policy by which this country has been so long governed; yet, a great part of the evils so justly complained of, spring from the encouragement given by the proprietors to the increase of an excessive population, in parcelling out their estates into such small allotments. The facility of procuring food does not, ultimately, here prove to be a blessing; if any means could be devised for checking this extraordinary advance of the population in Ireland, it would be highly beneficial; but how and when this check is to be made to operate seems a difficult problem. In almost every district, the cabins seem to be multiplying; the necessary consequence of increasing inhabitants; the evil is thus hourly becoming greater, and daily less remediable. Any hasty innovation would involve in so much misery a great part of the laborious orders, and bring so much

embarrassment on their suppositions, that I almost despair of seeing any general substantial melioration afforded to the farmer, because I cannot perceive any advantage likely to be derived by the latter; few of whom could command capital sufficient to consolidate their estates into such farms as would tempt parties with competent means to become their tenants, were there no other difficulty to be surmounted.

It is truly grievous to contemplate ages of suffering to the richest and most productive part of the empire. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER XLIX.

Ardracken, Sept. 25, 1813.

A LEISURE moment this evening affords me a second opportunity of addressing you to-day. The pleasure I experienced on the renewal of my acquaintance with the amiable and estimable residents in this mansion, was heightened by the kind reception and welcome we received—and I could not but gratefully feel and express how much I had become their debtor for being the primary cause of my pleasurable visit to Ireland; from which I had derived such gratification as called forth my warmest acknowledgments. Admirers of Ireland themselves, they cordially partook of the sentiments felt and expressed by my friend and myself.

Ardracken is a modern edifice, erected by the former Bishop on a plan of the late Dr. Beaufort; which unites much internal comfort with great external beauty and simple elegance, well designed and appropriated for the residence of so considerable a dignitary of the

church. The grounds are laid out with great taste, and the luxuriant growth of the trees and shrubs affords incontestable evidence of the fertility of the soil. The after-math was equal to any production of the kind I ever beheld: the meadow in the front of the house, which I particularly admired, had been for a succession of years annually cut for hay.

It is a practice in many parts of Ireland to let land in *con-acres*; when held under this denomination, the tenants, as I observed in a former letter, are under no control as to the mode of cropping or treatment of their farms. In these cases the rents are always high, extending from eight to ten pounds the acre. Reasoning from the experience acquired in England, one might fearlessly pronounce that such practices as this system not only permits, but encourages, must be destructive to the land. This, however, is not here the case; for a little rest restores it to its pristine fertility and friability, and enables it to receive all the meliorating influences of the atmosphere. In this circumstance appears an essential difference between the soils of England and Ireland.

These contractors for *con-acres* naturally avail themselves of the greatest possible benefit they

can derive from the land, wholly regardless of all future consequences.

I had great difficulty in believing that so extraordinary a tenure could be practically admitted; but I have heard so many instances of it, that I cannot doubt the fact, though it militates against all experience.

The Bishop of Meath has been a warm and zealous friend to agriculture: some years ago he was a great tillage farmer, as well as an extensive breeder of the long horned cattle. The disturbed state of the country, and his subsequent absence, induced his Lordship to relinquish his farm: his return may, I hope, renovate the Agricultural Society which formerly existed, and again encourage a spirit for farming and rural improvements.

The attention paid by his Lordship to the comforts of the cottiers is highly pleasing; to each cabin is attached an acre of meadow, half an acre for the growth of potatoes, and an acre for grazing a cow, equal to three English acres: the rent of the whole, including the cabin, is no more than four pounds fifteen shillings. The wages in the six summer months is one shilling, in the winter months ten pence

a day. The earnings of a laborer for the twelve months amount to about sixteen guineas, which, with his profit from the land in his occupation, worth about four pounds, give him an income of about twenty guineas a year; and few Irish laborers are so comfortably situated. At task work, the earnings are after the rate of ten shillings and sixpence for cutting an acre of oats, and five shillings for mowing an acre of meadow. Those who are so fortunate as to occupy such tenements, and have constant work, consider themselves as being highly blessed and successful. The attention paid in collecting what soil may be obtained from the public roads, shows the value set on manure for the potatoe crop. The fences, generally speaking, are very bad; care alone is necessary to make them excellent, as the white thorn may be produced in the highest perfection.

Some persons who are pleased to amuse themselves, repeat an observation, that has been attributed to Dr. Coventry, of whom it may justly be said that there is no one better, if there be any one equally skilled, in all matters appertaining to husbandry; that he judged of the fertility, luxuriance, and value of a soil, by the size and strength of the ragwort. If this be admitted as a fair criterion, the soil of the

county of Meath is entitled to rank high indeed in point of excellence.

We drove this morning to Beau-park, ten miles on the southern bank of the Boyne, to visit Mr. Lambert. The situation is beautiful; the rocks and wood on the banks of the river highly romantic, with a termination of the prospect by a full view of Slane's Castle. Mr. Lambert is a very spirited farmer; from his intimate acquaintance with Holkham, he has had opportunities of becoming fully convinced of the benefits resulting from good management. The soil on which he has to operate is in general good, and well adapted to the turnip husbandry; though the quantity of land under green crops, when compared with the stock on the farm, appeared to me insufficient. The farming offices are commodious; the stack-yard did great credit to the husbandmen. In no situation can an example of good farming be more required; as much of this rich district is most miserably cultivated and overrun with weeds.

Navan is a neat little town, and, within these few years, has become a considerable market for grain, in consequence of the facility given to the transportation of it, by the canal to Drogheda. To the spirited exertions of one

individual, Mr. Matthew Codd, the country is highly indebted; this gentleman is largely concerned in the distilleries of Drogheda, and has not only greatly contributed towards promoting the corn trade at Navan, but has set the neighbourhood a good example in the management of a farm he occupies, and the use of the Scotch cart, which he has the merit of introducing.

I am not disposed to quarrel with the farmer for being slow in adopting the practices of gentlemen agriculturists. They, no doubt, apply to others, what has often been said to myself, that I "might do what I liked," meaning, I suppose, that I might play the fool without incurring the penalty attached to my folly; as the expense which would not be seriously felt in my case, might be ruinous to others. This is fair reasoning; it is indispensably necessary that farmers should have convincing proof of the value of experiments by gentlemen, before they embark in them; but the success of intelligent persons in their own line will naturally have due weight on their minds, and tend to remove their inveterate prejudices against every new species of improvement, however advantageous. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER L.

Ardbracken, Sept. 26, 1812. 1

THE episcopal chapel is at a short distance from the palace; the church, though small, is neat, the congregation by no means numerous. The duty on Sundays does not commence till twelve o'clock, which precludes an evening service in winter. A disposition to late hours seems to pervade all ranks in Ireland: the value of time is known only to those who are fully occupied.

The disorders which had so long prevailed in the established church had been a source of regret to its friends;—the obstacles to a correction of them, many and powerful. Notwithstanding the odium and unpopularity attending the attempt, the Bishop of Meath has, in his diocese, done much towards a reform. Above thirty churches and parsonage houses have been built and repaired. The strict regularity with which residence has been enforced, has obtained his Lordship the approbation of every

172 *Residence of Clergy strictly enforced.*

candid individual. Whether it may have the effect of promoting the cause of protestantism is doubtful; but that it will remove a stigma from the establishment cannot be questioned.

After service we visited a charter school. These institutions were established by an act of the Irish Parliament, in 1733, for the instruction of the children of popish and other poor persons, in the English language, and, for a time, were employed as a political instrument for the conversion of the catholics. In 1775, the board, under whose direction they were regulated, resolved to admit none but catholic children: experience soon proved the inefficacy of this determination, and in 1803 it was rescinded. The board became ashamed of the means resorted to for making proselytes; and the execrations attending their efforts excited a general aversion and dislike to these charter schools, which are not considered as seminaries for instruction, but as traps for making protestants, by practising on the poverty of parents, who, tempted by the maintenance of their children, connive at their being brought up in an adverse religious persuasion. According to the principle on which these establishments were founded, poor persons' children were to be educated without being required to sub-

scribe to the doctrines of the established church; for, supported as they are out of the public funds, they ought to be open to all classes, instead of being monopolized by a seventh part of the community.

The children are comfortably lodged, well taken care of, and considerable attention is bestowed on their instruction. The neighbouring gentlemen act as visitors; and every Sunday a minute is made of the condition of the school and improvement of the scholars for the inspection of the board. On some occasions, the official inspector and the visitors have disagreed; and on the board supporting the party of its own appointment, the visitors have seceded, and abandoned the school to the direction of the inspector. The boys read tolerably well under the old method of teaching; in favor of which the inspector is so prepossessed, that he assured me he did not believe that the old system is capable of improvement. It is scarcely to be credited that any individual, holding such a station in life, could be so totally unacquainted with what is passing in the world, and which has excited so much inquiry in his own particular vocation.

The revenue of these charter schools, arising

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from public grants and private legacies, amounts to above thirty thousand pounds per annum : great abuses are suspected to have taken place in the administration of these funds, which have not in all cases, perhaps, been corrected. The number of children educated is calculated at two thousand, at an expense of fourteen pounds each.

Schools in most of the great towns are establishing on the systems of Dr. Bell or Mr. Lancaster; and as the gospel is now put into the hands of so large a portion of the rising generation, this diffusion of knowledge must be attended with the happiest effects. The universal principles of charity and forbearance, so conspicuous in the doctrines of the Redeemer of mankind, cannot fail to make an impression, and to soften down those asperities so repugnant to the professions of the Christian religion. Should the catholic be happily induced to wave his disinclination to the instruction of his children in the English Old and New Testament, it would, in my opinion, remove one of the most formidable of the objections to catholicism—that of keeping the people of that persuasion in a state of utter darkness and lamentable ignorance. The advantages of education not long ago were forcibly impressed on my consideration by a poor Irishman, whom I was

admonishing, in consequence of his getting into a riot from intoxication. "Very true, Sir, I am much to blame, but perhaps more to be pitied; education has given you, Sir, the power of controlling your passions; the want of it makes me a slave to mine."

Within the last twenty years, more extraordinary events have been crowded together than the civilized world ever before witnessed. Great as have been the political revolutions of states, they bear no comparison to the changes reasonably to be anticipated in the moral condition of society in consequence of the diffusion of knowledge, now so rapidly extending over the face of the habitable part of the universe. Man will no longer remain ignorant of the unerring principles of truth and natural religion; these will teach him his indispensable duty to his God; while by the Gospel and Sacred Writings, he will become well-educated in his social duty and obligations to his fellow creatures. The distinguished lead which Britain has taken in this glorious work will immortalize her name, when all her victories shall be forgotten.

I purpose writing again before we leave this hospitable roof; till when, adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER LI.

Ardbracken, Sept. 27, 1813.

WE paid a visit this morning to Somerville, the seat of Sir Marcus Somerville, about nine miles from this place. Some very fine old timber adds greatly to the respectability and consequence of the house; the situation of which is high and commanding, and the soil well calculated for the turnip husbandry.

The farming offices in this neighbourhood are more extensive than any we had before observed. The farmers were busily employed in stacking their grain, and in wheat sowing on their fallows. It is not uncommon here to have seven crops of oats in succession; instances are reported of lands being thus employed for twenty years without interruption; and what renders this fact still more remarkable, the latter crops are said to have been productive and profitable. Old grass lands are considered equal to the growth of potatoes without manure, and to the production of four or five crops of

oats afterwards. A gentleman, who occupies a considerable farm in the neighbourhood, amused me by stating that he had already taken from his land five or six white crops ;—that he thought of doing something by way of melioration to the soil, and was disposed to sow the next crop of oats with clover as preparative to manuring it ; which, I afterwards understood, was to be effected by a dressing of hot lime. Fortunate indeed are the proprietors and occupiers of soils capable of sustaining a system of such exhaustion. The common rotation of cropping is wheat, oats, fallow, potatoes, clover, all without the application of any manure !

The Bishop of Meath's domain contains some excellent land ; the farms are small, and principally let in con-acres by the year, at a rent of eight pounds per annum. The attention paid to the comforts of the lower orders surrounding the palace does great credit to the feelings and humanity of his Lordship. Greatly is the possessor of wealth to be pitied whose pursuits are exclusively directed to the search after gratifications of a sensual description. To confer and promote the happiness of others, is to a benevolent mind the most enviable prerogative of riches. The warmth

which emanates from the sun gives an animation to all created beings, in which every eye luxuriates! Gratitude for kindnesses received conveys to the heart of him who bestows a substantial self gratulation which the sensualist has no power to conceive or means to procure!

It would be difficult to place a princely revenue under the administration of a philanthropist who, in its judicious disposal, would display greater benevolence and urbanity than the Bishop of Meath! In this tribute to the amiable qualities of my friend, I make no sacrifice of my sincerity to his excellence and worth! yet there are points on which I have the misfortune to dissent most decidedly from him; but in doing so I am willing to do full justice to his conscientious notions; and am ready to admit, that such wonderful circumstances have taken place in modern times, as should induce the most confident to entertain great doubts on any national speculative question: regulated and settled by the practice of this house is highly becoming the sacred office exalted under its roof. Prayers read by his Lordship morning and evening, and entirely without affectation, and with so proper a regard to what is fit and

right to be done, that the service cannot be attended without inspiring an earnest desire that the custom prevailed in every family. The time occupied is not of such duration as to interfere either with the pleasure or business of the heads of the house, or the duty of their dependants and servants.

We were so fortunate as to meet with Mrs. Ruxton, sister to Mr. Edgeworth, who, learning our route, and justly anticipating the wish we must naturally have for an opportunity of paying our compliments to a family so highly respected, kindly favored us with an introduction.

However strange it may appear, there are persons in Ireland much disposed to find fault with Miss Edgeworth for exposing the foibles of her countrymen. They affect to consider this as a want of due partiality to her native land. Ridicule in general is the most powerful and successful rod for the correction of folly: sometimes it succeeds where the soundest reasoning and most persuasive admonition would be treated with indifference. The judgment must be greatly perverted indeed which is not alive to the warm and generous sympathy that dictates all the effusions of Miss Edgeworth's pen.

The public in modern times has been powerfully influenced and acted on by a low species of humor—political caricatures; which have had an operation beyond what the most persuasive representation of the same subject could have produced. As far as I may be permitted to judge, I should vouch for the traits of Irish character to be no less correctly, than ably, and without exaggeration, drawn by the hand of Miss Edgeworth.

I cannot help considering the Irish and their soil as bearing a great affinity to each other. The natural luxuriance of each is productive of much unprofitable exuberance, which due cultivation would restrain, and render useful and excellent to both.

I have hitherto studiously avoided noticing any of the occurrences connected with the Rebellion. All parties have so much reason for regret that every reference to so painful a subject must occasion the most distressing recollections. When the passions of men become heated, and power exempted from responsibility is placed in their hands, too often they act without regard to humanity. The instant the protection of the law was withdrawn, the character of the nation suffered an important

change. Ferocity on one side soon produced revenge on the other. Though every thing at present has a tranquil appearance, the calm is not, I fear, accompanied with any confidence in its permanence. Every idle rumor spreads widely, and indicates an apprehension that revolt may again produce its devastating effects. We were perpetually questioned as to the state and disposition in which we had found the country. Can a state be said to be assured of its security, where the inhabitants generally, are discontented and miserable? With a moderate distribution of the necessaries of life, the aggregate of mankind, who do not reason deeply, would be disposed to be content. This assumption is particularly applicable to Ireland, where the bulk of the people look little beyond the present moment; for, until their sufferings become insupportable, their eyes are shut against them; but where real grievances exist, which are supposed to be remediable by the government only, there will naturally be created a disposition to receive, right or wrong, every injurious impression, and to impute the cause and origin of all the ills endured, to the administration of state affairs. The mutual prejudices of both persuasions sanction the idle and malicious tales of each; and while the orangeman accuses the catholic of a design to

destroy him and the whole race of protestants, the catholic dreads fire and extermination from the orangeman. The blame imputable to such conduct ought not to be equally divided. The ignorance of the catholic affords some excuse for his implicit reliance on preposterous calumnies; but the same apology cannot be offered for the orangeman, in whose community are to be found education, liberality, rank, and fortune, competent to the inculcation of very different sentiments, and to the dissuasion from all uncharitable acts or opinions. Proofs in abundance are not wanting that kind and considerate treatment, alone, insured security to Ireland, in the midst of all the horrors of the late civil war; yet are there those who reprobate the conduct of Lord Cornwallis, and tax his administration with imbecility and folly, for having saved their country by his humanity and forbearance.

As far as we were enabled to form any judgment, the people generally appeared disposed to be quiet. A new confederacy, however, has unhappily arisen in West Meath; the misguided associates of which are distinguished by the denomination of *carders*, from an instrument used in flax dressing, called a card; with which individuals who may be so unfortunate as to

fall under their displeasure are punished. This association originated in the neighbourhood of Mullingar, in consequence of the priests raising their fees for confessions, masses, &c. Whatever at the commencement might be the ostensible cause for complaint, it soon became the means of gratifying private malice. Those who complied hazarded the resentment of the carders, and much cruelty has in various instances been inflicted. The assigned cause for these outrages demonstrates the declining influence of the priests; who, I really believe, have weight only as they conform to the general predominant feeling of the people, and that their voice becomes very unimportant when they oppose such disposition.

Adieu: we start to-morrow for Lord Farnham's; and the Bishop sets out at the same time on a visit of confirmation to the southern part of his diocese.

J. C. C.

LETTER LII.

Cavan, Sept. 28, 1813.

FULLY impressed with the truth of the maxim that "he who gains time gains every thing," we have constantly set out early; and this morning we were in the carriage before five.

This practice not only facilitates a long journey, but, where a remote point is to be reached, the traveller is enabled to avoid those accidents which frequently occur in journeys by night.

The five miles to Kells took us through a rich country, almost entirely devoted to the production of corn. We passed Lord Headfort's place, which is most legibly marked with the ruinous effects of absenteeism:—it was not necessary to be told that the estate was deserted by its owner. The plantations are extensive, and in a thriving condition.

Kells is a neat little town; the approach to it very handsome. At the southern extremity of the church-yard is a fine round tower. The

cabins bear painful testimony of the poverty of the inhabitants, which is here increased by the scarcity and consequent price of fuel. The Archdeacon's residence, at a short distance from the town, appears to be a charming spot.

In the ten miles to Virginia a material change takes place in the soil, from a deep loam to a sharp gravel, on which the crops of grain appear to have been but indifferent. Lough Vernes is a large piece of water, in which there are a few scattered islands; the southern shore is bold, but it has no decided beauty. Virginia, in itself, is but a poor place; and its surrounding neighbourhood indicates the same wretchedness. Some grain still remained uncut, whilst that which was stacked was so ill secured that great loss must be unavoidable.

When it is understood that the rent of the land is from twenty shillings to forty shillings an acre, it is difficult to account for such unpardonable neglect. The public carriers have mostly adopted the Scotch cart, but the farmers continue the use of the Irish car. In several instances we observed the wheat sown on the surface, and turned in with the plough; in others, a portion of the land was left unploughed, and this was thrown over the sown stitch with

the shovel. This practice may be valuable where the soil is shallow, as it affords the seed a better covering; but I understood it was done at the costly expense of twenty shillings an acre.

As we left Virginia we met the catholic Bishop of Meath coming into the town; and notwithstanding the road was extremely wet and dirty, every catholic of either sex, bent the knee, and implored his blessing. He was going to consecrate a chapel in the neighbourhood, and was to confirm afterwards the numbers we met in the road to attend him.

We had thirteen miles to Cavan: the first part of the road was mountainous, the soil poor, and very ill cultivated. Lord Farnham has here a park, containing some hundred acres, in the wildest part of the country: it does not possess a tree or any other shelter for the deer. Were this country well planted, it would have a very different appearance. The fences are miserable, and every object proclaims the poverty of the inhabitants.

We overtook a Methodist preacher who is settled at Bolen, a small village about mid-way to Cavan. Mr. Cummins, the landlord, has rebuilt a considerable part of the place, and the

who complained of ill Usage from the Catholics. 187

inhabitants are in debt to this gentleman for the erection of a Methodist chapel. The officiating minister complained of the indocility of the catholics, and the violence used by their priests towards such as attempted to attend his meeting. He stated several instances in which the priests had recourse to blows, for the purpose of dispersing the catholics from his chapel. I know from experience how ready persons of this description are to avail themselves of the cry of persecution against them: yet every honest attempt to improve the morals, and otherwise benefit mankind, is certainly highly commendable.

Whether more evil or good has arisen to the community from the introduction of Methodism admits of doubt. From what I have seen of these sectaries, I am not prepossessed in their favor, and candidly acknowledge I wish any acceptable means could be devised to lessen their influence, and bring back the people to a due respect for the established church. In many instances a want of room prevents the common people from attending public worship. In modern towns, it would be highly beneficial to the cause of religion, could government afford aid in procuring sittings for the lower orders, by appropriating for their accommoda-

188 *Improved Appearance about Cavan.*

tion a part of what is given in augmentation of small livings.

Every proprietor seems ambitious to have a town on his estate. I cannot but question the policy as well as propriety of collecting numbers of people together, in places which afford no present employment, and offer no facilities for the establishment of manufactories on a future occasion. A very few individuals are sufficient for all the present purposes of agriculture; and where there is no trade, every supernumerary must become a dead weight on the industry of those who are occupied. Such improvements can alone be valuable, which increase the employment of the working classes, and will be immediately or prospectively beneficial to those who thus spiritedly embark their time and capital.

As we approached Cavan the country improved: those delightful undulations which contribute so much to the beauty of Irish landscape were here very prominent features.

Cavan is a small, neat town; and from the number of new buildings, seems to be in a state of progressive improvement. The church is repairing, and a large and convenient gaol has

lately been built, the internal regulations of which do great credit to the magistrates. The prisoners (who are not numerous) have their cells both heated and ventilated, with every comfort consistent with their security. The Dispensary is on an admirable plan, and affords extensive relief: as the expenditure is annually published, it would not be much additional trouble to state also the different maladies under which the patients are admitted. Such records afford data for tracing the rise and progress of disorders, and facilitate the means of prevention.

The rent of land round Cavan is high—from four to seven pounds per acre; and the tithes are in proportion. Agistment tithe being extinguished, the great proprietor and substantial farmer, whose principal returns are from grazing, do not feel the pressure of tithes like the small needy occupier, whose lands are chiefly under the plough, and on whom the tithes fall particularly heavy. It is however contended, that the land is hired with reference to this burden, and the rent is in proportion. In great farms this is unavoidably the case; but not so in small holdings, where the competition for them is so great as to outweigh all prudential considerations.

120 *Little Hope of a Commutation of Tithes.*

The proprietor of extensive estates has little interest in effecting a commutation of tithes: the value of his land would not be much improved, or at least in no proportion to the compensation which would be demanded by the church; besides which, as the church is the only remaining source of patronage, the higher ranks look up to it as a provision for one or more of their descendants, and are silently by no means displeased at the growing increase of its revenues. Much as the people may be desirous of an abolition or commutation of tithes, and greatly as such a measure would contribute to tranquillise the country, there does not appear any reason to hope that so desirable an improvement will speedily be adopted.

The approach to Farnham is delightful: in my next I shall endeavor to bring you acquainted with some of its various beauties. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER LIII.

Farnham, Sept. 29, 1818.

FROM Cavan we proceeded two miles through a delightful country, the surface of which was studded by an endless variety of small hills. The pencil of Mr. Gilpin could scarcely improve the beautiful rotundity of their forms, accompanied by extensive, noble woods. The fences were extremely good, and well furnished with timber trees. The soil appeared to be very rich, as it was clothed with most luxuriant verdure; and such were the charms of the surrounding country as to leave little for the eye to desire.

The domain at Farnham is richly ornamented with a profusion of fine timber, and possesses greater diversity of character than is commonly met with. The neatness and apparent comfort of the cottages, at the entrance of the grounds, correspond with the magnificence of the place, and proclaim that its dependants share in the blessings of its affluence. Nothing is more

prepossessing than the appearance of happiness widely diffused around the seat of opulence and grandeur; it predisposes the mind to regard every thing in the most favorable point of view, and to pay homage, by anticipation, to those perfections of our nature that command respect and ensure esteem.

The house is a large modern building, in which comfort and utility have been studied more than external magnificence; it stands high, and commands at a distance an interesting view of the varied line of summit, which is singularly beautiful. The rich though soft features of the landscape immediately surrounding the house, are of a completely opposite character to the distant prospect from the higher grounds; where a bold Alpine chain terminates the view, in which beauty and grandeur conspire to make it impressive. Two most picturesque sheets of water, with bold, wooded banks, contribute their ornamental effect to this romantic combination of scenery. In the midst of the profuse variety of character of which Farnham has to boast, it is extremely pleasing at every step to observe, that art is every where judiciously made subservient to nature. The various roads through this domain are kept in perfect order, and afford a pleasur-

able access to every part of it. Nature has done too much to leave any thing for human ability to add in point of decoration, unless it be in those few spots which possess no decisive character.

From the lakes which form a part of Lough Erne, the banks rise very boldly, and are clothed with magnificent oak and beech; the latter are particularly large, several of the trees containing upwards of a hundred feet of timber. Over the whole of the luxuriant pastures is dispersed a profusion of white thorns, standing singly, and of great size.

It is difficult to decide to which of the characters of this delightful place a just preference is due; whether to the lake scenery, diversified by the boldness of its banks, and the beautiful indentation of its shores; or to the combination and variety of outline, from the gentle swell in the fore ground to a termination in the lofty chain of distant Alpine mountains. I was so charmed with both, that I could scarce determine which most to admire. In the grounds above the house, there is a fascinating prospect of the hills and mountain boundary to the eastward, which is particularly worthy of notice; the effect of this view is like

that of fore-shortening on canvas, the most difficult part in painting, which, when well executed, never fails to ensure due admiration. The gradation of interest is, from this point, so happily preserved, and the beauty and grandeur so admirably blended, as mutually to assist each other without a predominance in either, that, I think, I should select this spot as being the most singular and picturesque.

Where there is so much to commend, one receives perhaps a sort of pleasure in discerning some petty fault which may give proof of sincerity, and that praise so justly elicited is not dictated by flattery. There are a few formal clumps covering the summits of some of the most beautiful hills, which disfigure and destroy the effect of their terminations; these I could not help wishing to see either partially broken, or wholly removed.

Great as are the attractions of nature at Farnham, they do not constitute the whole of what is here entitled to admiration. At the distance of three miles is the head waters of Lough Erne. Here Lord Farnham has a most delightful retreat, consisting of two romantic islands; the largest containing upwards of two hundred acres, the other about half that number. The

surface of both is greatly diversified, their shores bold and amply covered with wood. The character of this part of the Lough bears a resemblance to magnificent river scenery. From an eminence on one of the lakes, we had a full view of the majestic mountains forming the boundary of Lough Erne, which we had before seen on our road to Sligo. The immediate prospect around us was very rich and romantic; our former regret, on passing Lough Erne without examination, was greatly increased by the beautiful specimens now presented of its multifarious attractions.

On the island which we visited dwells a cottager, apparently enjoying good health and happiness, derived from the liberality and kindness of his noble benefactor. From Lady Farnham's cottage at Killeshandra, the view is very delightful. The building is a pleasing object, and constructed with great taste and simplicity. This part of the country boasts a prodigious variety of interesting landscape, and would afford ample field for the pencil of an artist. We went to view the house of one of the keepers, which, during the rebellion, had been attacked with a view of obtaining arms. The old man and his family were much respected, and it was not the intention of the

misguided assailants to offer any violence, had their demand been complied with. On entrance being refused, the infatuated beings fired into the house, and killed the poor man's daughter : she had been the first alarmed, and had approached the door. The keeper and his son, undismayed, defended his dwelling, and it is believed that several of the infuriated party were killed.

Whilst we cannot but condemn, it is impossible not to have some feeling of pity for these misguided people, whose lawless conduct augmented, in a high degree, the calamities from which they vainly thus sought alleviation. The friends to Ireland, those of humanity, and every individual interested in the safety and prosperity of the empire, are imperiously called on to inquire, whence arise the cause or causes creating this fatal propensity to outrage? If permanent tranquillity be the object of government, the sufferings from which these disorders spring ought to be ascertained and removed : that sufferings exist, and to a degree incompatible with the existence of rational beings in a free country, I verily believe, and am firmly of opinion the redress to which these miserable creatures are entitled, would soon restore to their superiors the affection of a

community, who have yet to learn the value of social order, and the benefits derivable from the protection of the law. No people are more sensible of kindnesses bestowed, none more warm-hearted, brave, and generous, or more alive to neighbourly or domestic feeling! Are not such people an honor to the state? do they not claim its commiseration? and are they not entitled to the exertion of the best efforts, in some way or other, to relieve their present deplorable condition? Enlighten by instruction, admonish with consideration and temper; and they may be led by gratitude and affection; but force and oppression, though persevered in for centuries, have not been able either to subdue their spirit, or control their conduct. Adieu.

J. C. C,

LETTER LIV.

Farnham, Sept. 30, 1813.

IN my last I attempted to give a faint sketch of the great and diversified beauties of this charming place, but the powers of description are limited—the meanest efforts of the pencil surpass the most eloquent details of the pen in conveying any thing like a correct idea of the beauty of a country. Most highly indeed have we been gratified with the immediate and remote scenery of this extensive domain; in quitting the consideration of it I shall proceed to describe other sources whence we have derived great pleasure, and which are more within the compass of my abilities to detail.

Lord Farnham has peculiar merit as a grazer and breeder of stock. The local beauty of this country principally consists in the undulation of its surface, which renders it more applicable to the rearing of cattle than to the production of corn. The proportion of land under tillage, compared with the size of this

farm, is trifling ; the green crops of consequence are insignificant. The quantity of meadow reserved for hay is prodigious. Upwards of three hundred acres are here annually mown, the produce of which is made into hay in the manner practised in Suffolk, and is of as good quality as any produced in the south of England, both in color and odor. Oxen are mostly employed in the lands under tillage. Mr. Webb, the bailiff, is a native of Suffolk, and well versed in the best practices of that county. The soil of the farm is strong, the pasture excellent, and the whole extends over one thousand six hundred acres, divided into suitable enclosures ; where a little more attention to cleaning would give the fields a more sightly appearance. A grazing farm, however, on such a scale, cannot be expected to be kept so clean and free from weeds as a more limited one, under the constant operation of the plough, and a regular course of cropping. The Farnham breed of long-horned cattle is in high estimation in every part of Ireland. Though not an admirer, nor an advocate for this breed, I must do his Lordship the justice to say, I never saw together so many good specimens. The Devons also are particularly neat : a cross between them and the cows of the country has produced a great improvement. Several of the oxen from this

cross were complete in point of form—appeared to have a great disposition to fatten, and, as far as I could judge, were likely to be very beneficial to the grazier. A cross between the Devon and Kerry cow had produced a remarkable animal: the breadth of its back, and the strength and firmness of its legs, make it resemble a giant's stool: I never saw greater value in less compass. His Lordship possesses several good bulls of the Devon breed, and the long-horned. Though I do not pretend to much critical knowledge in cattle, yet it was impossible not to be gratified by the sight of numerous fine animals of the different sorts. The Leicester flock was good; and a trial is making of South-downs, of which a part had been furnished by Mr. Wynne: from the nature and quality of the pasture here, I think the South-down likely to merit a preference to the Leicester.

The breed of draft-horses is excellent, originally crossed from that of Flanders: they have great bone and strength, with remarkably good action.

To succeed in any pursuit, a certain portion of enthusiasm is requisite. Lord Farnham is himself an excellent judge of stock, and spares no expense or labor in rearing or attending to

them. The regularity and order conspicuous in the general arrangements of the farm are highly pleasing, and reflect great credit on the judgment which directs and conducts the business: this is well worthy of attention, as this species of care and diligence are too frequently failing points in Ireland. The woods alone afford constant work to about eighty persons. Daily returns are made of the mode in which each laborer is employed in his Lordship's service.

Nothing can be more delightful than to observe the attention which is paid to the numerous individuals attached to this princely establishment. Too frequently in Ireland have we seen the proximity to wealth rather augment than diminish the surrounding wretchedness. Where a perfect indifference to the miserable lot of the indigent prevails, their sufferings become increased by the contrast perpetually presented to their view. A permission to behold the glorious presence of the sun, and yet be denied a participation in his genial warmth, would add grievously to the privation. Those of reflective minds who are led to compare their own condition with the lot of too many who surround them, must be convinced of the blessings conferred on a neighbourhood in

202 *Description of Lord Farnham's Cottages.*

which a noble fortune is expended in promoting objects of unquestionable utility. From the individuals at Farnham with whom I conversed, I had no doubt they considered the advantages they possessed in a proper point of view, and were gratefully disposed towards their noble employer. We visited many of the cottages, and were gratified in finding so much attention to good order, and, in general, to cleanliness. Laborers' wages are one shilling a day in summer, in winter ten pence; in addition they have a cottage with a rood of garden, at a rent of twenty shillings—for the grazing of a cow, they pay thirty shillings—for half an acre of meadow thirty shillings—half an acre for potatoes thirty shillings.—Total five pounds ten shillings a year, with the privilege of digging turf gratis. There are fourteen cottages together on one spot, beside others distributed over the estate; and more are erecting. The usual wages of the country are ten pence a day in summer and eight pence in winter; but the earnings on his Lordship's farm may be calculated to average a shilling a day the year round. Premiums are given to those cottagers who keep their ground and garden in the best state; it was most grateful to see them all well cultivated, and not only producing what was most useful, but also that which was somewhat

ornamental. The propagation and care of a flower in a laborer's garden indicate an exemption from the perpetual oppression of poverty.

In one of the cottages I met such an instance of pure, disinterested conjugal attachment, that I cannot omit reciting it. A young woman, whose husband had enlisted, and left her with two children, was permitted, from motives of humanity, to remain in her house, and partake of all its appendant advantages. The husband repenting the rash step of leaving his family, wished them to join him. Such was the influence of affection over her mind, that the poor woman resolved, at all hazards, to brave every difficulty, and follow the fortune of the partner of her heart! Whilst prudence could not but blame, I could not avoid exclaiming, "What a noble minded creature! who, exclusively impelled by connubial affection, sacrifices present ease and every comfort, to share and lessen the sufferings of her husband."

The dispensary extends its beneficial offices to all the workmen in the employ of his Lordship. The unostentatious benevolence which characterizes this establishment, and pervades every part, is as gratifying to the heart as the exterior of the property is fascinating to the

204 *The Survey of Farnham most gratifying.*

eye. Lady Farnham's kindness and humane attention extends to every rank. Clothes are distributed by her Ladyship to the females ; and while she mitigates the afflictions and sorrows of the aged, the youth become duly and indiscriminately instructed, without any reference to the religious persuasion of their parents.

The survey of Farnham has afforded a gratification, and made an impression, not easily to be obliterated from my recollection. Were such conduct the general practice, discontent would soon have no existence in the country, and Ireland would become as distinguished for the happiness of her people as for the fertility of her soil.

The same order and method which regulate the domestic establishment, by extension to all other concerns, however distant, bring the whole of his Lordship's affairs under his immediate review. The farming buildings—their repairs—the woods—the fences and permanent improvements, are all conducted with the like uniformity and precision ; and where punctuality is thus made indispensable, every department of agency must be duly executed.

As good farmers have commonly the best seasons, so good masters have usually the best

servants. A perpetual outcry against servants generally implies as great a want of order and consistency in the employer as remissness in the laborer ; for when the working classes know they will be compelled to do their duty, they either cheerfully subscribe, or do not engage in the service.

My admiration of the exterior, inherent character, and interior arrangements of this splendid domain and impressive establishment—with the profound respect I must ever entertain for its noble possessors, made me seriously regret I could no longer avail myself of their kindness and hospitality. To-morrow we bend our way towards Edgeworth's Town, whence I shall again have the pleasure of addressing you. For the present—Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER LV.

Edgeworth's Town, Oct 1, 1813.

ON our road hither this morning, I stopped to take a second view of the Bishop of Kilmore's Devons: many of them were very handsome, and in point of size they exceeded Lord Farnham's. Two such stocks of beautiful cattle are scarcely to be met with.

The Bishop of Kilmore's bailiff is a Scotchman, and seems to be well acquainted with the most approved practices of his country. The green crops do him great credit: I have not yet in Ireland seen any to compare with them. There were fourteen acres of turnips in one piece, which I estimated at thirty-six tons the English acre: it was truly delightful to inspect such a specimen of good farming. The draining and reclaiming of bog are on a great scale: such an example of improvement is calculated to render essential service to the country, and does great honor to the spirit and patriotism of my Lord Bishop.

The pleasure I received from an inspection of this valuable introduction of good husbandry made me the more regret I could not escape without a glance at the environs of the episcopal palace and cathedral church-yard. The description of this diocese which a Bishop of Kilmore, in 1690, gives in a letter to the Bishop of London, might, with some little alteration, be too appropriate on the present occasion. "I have been" says he, "about my diocese, and can set down out of my own knowledge and view, what I shall relate and shortly speak : much ill matter in a few words. It is very miserable every way : the cathedral of Ardagh, one of the most ancient in Ireland, and said to have been built by St. Patrick, together with the Bishop's house, are now down to the ground," &c. Could the good old prelate raise his head and take a view of the church-yard, &c. he would perceive that, after the lapse of nearly two centuries, the dilapidations still remain.

It is impossible to notice such inattention without concern : with whom the fault rests I know not, but it would be well the responsible party should be made ashamed of his neglect, as such an outrage against decency affords a fair pretence to the opponents of the church

208 *Neglect of Church-Yards in Ireland.*

for ascribing indifference to essentials in its professors.

The church-yards, as I before have observed, are much neglected in many other parts of Ireland: in England they are not always properly attended to, but here the neglect is very reprehensible.

Great part of our road to Granard was hilly, the soil light, and the cultivation but indifferent. We met a number of people on their way to a fair, which was to be held the following day at a small village through which we had passed. Numerous as were the parties, the value of the few stock they had with them would scarcely amount to the expense they must incur. The domestication of the pig in this country makes him ready to attend the family on any excursion, and on these occasions facilitates the labor of driving. It appeared extraordinary to us, that as a great number of those on their road to the fair must have passed through Granard, where it was market-day, that they did not there dispose of their pigs. Perhaps this would have spoiled a frolic, the object of the greater part of the attendants.

We obtained a distant view of a considerable

water, Lough Shelon, which is said to be seven miles in length, and four in breadth. Granard is a neat town, consisting of one handsome street about half a mile long, at the head of which stands the Castle, built on a singular hill rising to a considerable height: as the surrounding country is perfectly flat, the hill has the appearance of being a work of art.

Prizes are annually given at Granard to the best performers on the Irish harp, an instrument which is falling into disuse; and, as far as we were enabled to judge, from its want of either melody or harmony, this circumstance is not much to be regretted. A few years ago, an establishment was formed at Belfast for the purpose of teaching blind persons to play on this instrument: as a mean of subsistence to those whose resources are so limited, the design was highly commendable. At Faun, we attended a poor boy who had been thus instructed: his misfortune, and not his proficiency, was his recommendation.

The principal street at Granard was overflowing: possibly four thousand people were crowded into it. To force our way through such a multitude was no easy task; the good humour, however, so conspicuous at Ballymo-

210 *Difficulties attending Bank Notes.*

ney, was here observable : it was wholly out of our power to avoid coming in contact with some of them, yet all gave way without any symptom of dissatisfaction. They were, on the whole, remarkably decently dressed, and sober.

As we entered the town, we were much amused by a countryman requesting our opinion on the goodness of a note which he had taken in payment for his pig. The number of forged notes reported to be in circulation here is a most serious calamity on the lower orders, and calls loudly for redress. Our utter inability to reply satisfactorily did not discourage him from asking, "What shall I do if you cannot decide whether or not the note be good?" Here fortunately we were better qualified to advise. We pronounced, that in fair dealing, the note should be changed, or the pig returned : the crowd which had gathered about us approved our award, and we afterwards learned that the buyer of the pig had acceded to the proffered terms of the seller.

On this and various other occasions, I have remarked the forward disposition of the lower Irish to submit to the decision of their superiors : surely where such great deference is paid to rank, kindness well directed would effect

much towards influencing and disposing the people to what is fit and right to be done!

From Granard we had four miles to Edgeworth's town; the country was quite flat, and to the southward there appeared a great extent of bog. The steeple at Edgeworth's town attracts notice at a great distance: the general want of these indications of places of worship is, to an eye habituated to their presence, a great drawback from the beauty of the country; it may be prejudice, but the spire or tower of the parish church gives great interest, in my opinion, to every landscape.

The immediate neighbourhood of Edgeworth's town has little beauty to attract attention; but the respect which talent inspires communicates a charm to the spot, which compensates for other disadvantages. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER LVI.

Edgeworth's Town, Oct. 2, 1813.

THE hospitality with which travellers are uniformly made welcome by all ranks in Ireland is not less a general than an admirable trait in the national character. We have gratefully to acknowledge many civilities which contributed in a high degree to the pleasure of our tour, and have deeply to regret, that we have it so little in our power to make any return for such kind attentions.

Under all circumstances talent must inspire respect, but peculiarly in its zealous application to the benefit and improvement of mankind. It then calls forth the warmest feelings of the heart, uniting esteem with great regard. On approaching this mansion I felt that respect which is due to the friend of the friendless! The impressive and elegant pen of Miss Edgeworth has depicted vice and folly in such forcible colors, and given such salutary warnings against their consequences, that I can

have no doubt, but that by her writings the best interests of her country have been long, and will continue to be, very materially promoted. In these the Irish character appears to be most justly and most happily represented, and that melange of wit, generosity, feeling, and folly, fairly exhibited, which are constantly producing so much to admire and to condemn at the same instant. The exposure of corruption and oppression has not been quite palatable in all instances; a cry has been attempted to be raised against her, as being deficient in patriotism: such efforts, however, will prove as ineffectual in depreciating the well deserved celebrity of this lady, as the passing cloud, which, if it succeed in obscuring the sun for a moment, serves only to give additional splendor to his re-appearance. We were pressed to extend our visit to another day, which being too great a temptation to be resisted, you will reasonably expect to receive some account of Miss Edgeworth, whose works you so highly admire.

She is at once so modest and so natural, that those unapprised of her talents would not believe it possible she could appear so unconscious of the high reputation she possesses. The admiration of the world has affected nei-

ther her head nor her heart; for whilst she seems wholly unconscious of her own merit, she is feelingly alive to the desert of every other individual. What was said by Maria Theresa of General Loudon may be very appropriately applied to this lady. The General being wanted at a levee by the Empress, and not being found, she observed, that "in peace you must seek him behind the door, in the day of battle you are certain of finding him in the front of danger."

Miss Edgeworth, in the common intercourse of life, is free from every assumption of superiority; it is with her pen alone she exercises it, in vindicating the cause of virtue and suffering humanity. The family is composed of children, of different marriages; yet nothing can be more delightful than the harmony which prevails. The ardent sentiment of benevolence, that prompts and animates their general labors, has the effect to modify or extinguish every individual selfish feeling; while the most strenuous endeavors of every member of this pleasant community are called into action, to promote the comfort and happiness of the whole. The first care of each seems to be that of forwarding such objects as meet the general wish of the whole party.

The present Mrs. Edgeworth is a daughter of Dr. Beaufort, and is not less distinguished for accomplishments, than for good sense in the conduct and arrangement of her domestic concerns.

The extraordinary endowments of every branch of this family make their acquaintance not less sought with avidity than valued when attained.

Mr. Edgeworth has long been eminent as a scholar, and man of genius. His studies have principally been directed to mechanics, in which science he has been very successful: to his suggestions and hints are the public indebted for some of the most valuable modern improvements. Mr. Edgeworth's vivacity renders him a most pleasing companion; time seems to have been sensible of this, and to have kept no record against him.

Such is the general outline of this charming family, who are all equally emulous to make their abilities useful in promoting the substantial interests of virtue and morality. Did I consider myself at liberty to descend to particulars, there is not a member of this little community, of whom an interesting portrait

might not be drawn; I cannot, however, avoid remarking, that if I have any pretension to prognostication, I shall not be disappointed in seeing a younger branch (Miss H.) on a future day, emulate her elder sister.

The smiles and flattering commendations of the world have corrupted many a heart, and diminished the estimation due to splendid talents, by creating unbounded expectations in their possessors, and obliterating the just claims of others. Not a particle of this disposition is discoverable here; the kind assiduity and attention shown to all around justly endear them to every rank; and make their residence a real blessing to the neighbourhood.

It is not the want of interesting matter, or of a disinclination to detail it, that induces me to refrain from proceeding on a subject, which would be as gratifying to you as to myself; but conformity to a rule to which I strictly adhere, that whatever I hear or see under any hospitable roof is to be considered as sacred. Indiscriminate censure would be highly ungrateful in the partakers of hospitalities: praise of the like description might subject such parties to the odium of adulation. Could I have felt authorized to have availed myself of the sentiments

and opinions of others, I could have detailed numerous anecdotes which would greatly have diversified my observations, and rendered them more entertaining to you; but the objections I stated to this species of registry at the commencement of my tour have not since been violated.

In the course of the morning, we drove to several farms on Mr. Edgeworth's estate. The occupations were larger, and the farming buildings more extensive, than we had hitherto generally met with. Considerable attention is paid to the fences, but the husbandry was far from perfection. The tenants are to be considered rather as grazing than tillage farmers. The soil, when not incumbent on bog, is a strong clay. The average size of the farms is about one hundred acres, let at about thirty shillings an acre. This seems comparatively a moderate rent.

Longford, from the flatness of its surface, ought to be an early county; late sowing however, and other bad management, accounted for our seeing much of the corn still uncut. Winter ploughing is here held to be injurious, and is supposed to make the land work badly—so little do modern practices seem to have made their way in this country.

A farm well conducted would be of great service in this district. It cannot be expected that any practical farmer, who has his rent to pay and bring up his family, should embrace new modes of husbandry merely on the reputation of any theory, however strongly recommended: nothing short of ocular demonstration that a new practice is more beneficial than his own, can prudently justify the practical man in its adoption.

Two of Mr. Edgeworth's tenants were invited to dinner: I rejoiced in an opportunity of meeting a class of men so respectable in our own country, and who I heartily wish were more frequently to be met with in Ireland. The parties were presbyterians, of Scotch descent, and in their manner and appearance retained very perceptible traits of their origin. Much as they were prepossessed in favor of their present practices, yet as they had both good sense and candor, I am persuaded they would soon become converts to the prudence of adopting a better system of husbandry.

As far as I was enabled to form a judgment, Mr. Edgeworth has much reason to be proud of his tenantry, who appear substantial and respectable men: every thing about their farms seemed to exhibit sufficiency and comfort; and

the subsisting friendliness towards them, on their landlord's part, was highly creditable to both.

The spirit of enterprise now so rapidly extending over Ireland cannot be long in producing improvement. Agricultural societies are forming in every quarter : I had the pleasure of being present at the establishment of one of these at Cavan. The expense too frequently attending such associations becomes fatal to their continuance ; and, as I could not but suspect at the time, will be destructive in the present instance. Lord Farnham signified his intention of giving premiums among his tenantry for superior management—a measure which in my opinion cannot fail in having the desired effect. Experience has convinced me such rewards ought to be restricted to practical farmers, and that the exclusion of gentlemen as competitors is indispensable to maintain a general good intelligence.

Edgeworth's Town has in a great measure been rebuilt. The church is modern ; and the spire, constructed of cast iron, was raised to its present eminence by machinery. Although there are a great number of presbyterians in the neighbourhood, the catholic chapel is a large building.

220 *Gratifying Visit to Edgeworth's Town.*

Our visit has been highly gratifying, and inspires a hope that it may lead to a further intimacy with this amiable family, which I feel warranted in pronouncing would be highly agreeable to you. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER LVII.

Athlone, Oct. 3, 1813.

IN the county of Longford a husbandman's wages are, for the summer months, twelve pence; in winter, ten pence, per day. Fuel, one of the prime necessities among the lower orders, is easily procured. The general appearance of the country induces me to believe, whenever a correct return of the population may be obtained, that the numbers will exceed every estimate hitherto produced: should this opinion prove correct, a very serious question may arise, whether the population may not be doubled in the next five-and-twenty years.

It is some consolation that the culture of the potatoe may be improved—its produce perhaps doubled: the haulm, instead of being suffered to remain and wither on the ground, if the potatoes be planted in proper time, may be cut off, and will afford food for milch cows. The reclaiming of bog, and the cultivation of mountain districts, comprehending nearly a third of the country, are resources capable also of

being made subservient to a further production of food. Cheering as this prospect may appear, and happy as it would be under some circumstances, it is not so here! All hope of augmenting the store of human happiness is vain, where the means of employing a superabundance of rational beings are wanting! Man to be happy must be engaged in some pursuit: that of the subordinate classes is restricted to bodily labor; among the next in rank, intellectual researches are added to bodily exertion—yet does occupation in both form the basis of substantial human felicity. Great as the labor may appear of procuring subsistence, it will employ but a small portion of a civilized population! How then is subsistence to be found for the remainder?

The church at Edgeworth's Town being under repair, there was no service. We were induced to protract our departure, for the purpose of seeing the numbers who attended the service of the catholic chapel: the congregation was numerous; not only the large building, but all the avenues leading to it, were crowded. The ringing of a bell warned the congregation to kneel and rise: several were prostrated on the ground—devotion was so unaffectedly displayed in the conduct of the majority, as to increase the regret we

felt that they were not better informed. It is seldom they obtain any material instruction; and what knowledge they possess of right and wrong is perhaps more to be ascribed to the efforts of well-disposed minds, than any cultivation of them by education. They were all decently dressed, and their behaviour was highly becoming. From their great numbers I should conclude that they must have come from some distance.

A singular instance of courage and humanity occurred during the rebellion in Mr. Edgeworth's family: compelled as they were to quit their residence on a very short notice, a difficulty arose as to what could be done with a female servant who was too ill to be removed. The housekeeper, who was an elderly woman, volunteered to remain and take care of the invalid; and the house was accordingly left in her charge. A few days after the family had removed, the insurgents arrived, and, surrounding the house, demanded arms. The housekeeper refused to open the door—a consultation was held, and it was resolved the door should be forced. At this moment, one who had some influence with the party came forward and remonstrated with the rest, observing, the Edgeworth family had always acted with kindness and attention towards their poor neighbours, and that he

would defend their property at the risk of his life. His courage and generosity had the desired effect—the whole of them departed without offering the least violence or injury to any thing about the premises. When the rebellion had subsided, this grateful fellow returned to his home near Edgeworth's Town. On some dispute with a neighbour, he was threatened with an information for having held a commission in the rebel army, on which Mr. Edgeworth offered him his interest to procure him a pardon. The man thanked him, but declined it, saying, he had no fears, as he had a *Corny* in his pocket, meaning, a card of protection, with Lord Cornwallis's seal and the initial letter C., of which it appears a distribution had been made to the peasants who returned quietly to their habitations—an instance that in the worst of times, kind treatment in Ireland would not fail of its influence even with those actually enrolled under the banners of rebellion.

We at length took our leave, highly indebted for the kindness and attention we had received, and fully impressed with no less respect than admiration of the party to whom we reluctantly bade adieu.

It was ten miles to Ballymona: in this distance we saw several handsome residences.

The surface of the country is flat, and the soil worthy of better treatment than it received. A few miles before we reached Ballymona, we passed the birth-place of Goldsmith, to which he is said to have alluded; and though the place in itself possesses little beauty or interest, the Muses have rendered it immortal.

Ballymona is a poor little town in the midst of a fine country. Our next stage was ten miles to Athlone, which we were anxious to reach in good time, being fearful we might not obtain accommodations, on account of the approaching fair at Ballinasloe. The soil appeared light, and its cultivation wretched. We passed many gentlemen's seats, some of which were of considerable magnitude.

At a small village, about half way, we encountered a funeral. The dirge, which had sounded so harsh and discordant at Cork, was conducted here in a manner and with an effect totally different. The performers were young females. The corpse, we were told, was that of a female under twenty, who appeared to be greatly lamented, as we observed many a tearful eye. The tones and cadence of the mourners partook so much of real grief, as to give a character of feeling to the whole, and created a

226 *Dancing Party in the Road.*

deep and painful interest. I did not suspect the Irish funeral ceremony could have been rendered so truly impressive and affecting.

How variously chequered are the scenes of life! We had scarcely recovered from the melancholy sensations the last spectacle had produced, when we became arrested by a large party, assembled at the entrance of a village, and engaged in dancing reels in the road. Their performance, which by no means disgraced them as dancers, exhibited so much life and spirit, that we became interested spectators of their rural festivity. Such was the buoyancy of youth, animated by the presence of beauty, that the discordant notes of a miserable fiddle called forth a joy and light-heartedness truly enviable.

We obtained an extensive view of Lough Ree, with its numerous islands. Its margin is flat, and the Shannon, which passes through it, may be considered as forming the lake.

Athlone is a considerable town, and rendered important as commanding the passage of the Shannon. The surrounding country is still flat, and has few beauties to recommend it. Athlone is the station of a large military force and a

numerous staff. Lines have been cast up on the south side of the Shannon, to protect the place against any sudden commotion, but they could oppose no effectual barrier against a regular force.

The Grand Canal passes through Athlone; and as it is also on the great road from Dublin, we found difficulty in getting ourselves and horses accommodated. The number of people who had passed in the last twenty-four hours had been immense. We considered ourselves fortunate in obtaining any kind of quarters.

The accommodations for horses at Ballinasloe were reported to be so bad, that I resolved, if possible, to avoid taking mine thither; and as all the post horses and carriages were engaged, we mean to take our chance of seats in one of the public carriages which pass through the town: if we can get conveyed thither, I take it for granted we shall find no difficulty in returning. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER LVIII.

Ballinasloe, Oct. 4, 1813.

IN the many hundred miles we have travelled through this country, we have never, except in one instance, had the least article pilfered at any of the inns. At Athlone, the preceding night, the chambermaid purloined a night ribband: though in itself of little or no value, the want of it induced me to inquire after it. As soon as the girl was called, she said it must be hidden by the bed clothes, and set about to find it; but the mode of her examination convinced me she had taken it, and on my imparting my suspicions, she became highly offended, and communicated the circumstance to her mistress. The character given of the young woman induced me to acquiesce in her acquittal, though my servant had not laid down the ribband ten minutes before it was missed. I mention this insignificant occurrence only as a proof of the general honesty of the servants at the inns, and as being contrary to the opinion and representation of many

travellers. Had the servants been disposed to pilfer, many opportunities were afforded them of taking articles infinitely more valuable.

The concourse of people passing all the evening, and through the night, prepared us for the bustle we had to encounter. We were fortunate in finding room in the mail from Athlone carrying four inside passengers: the driving was steady, and the horses were good, as was evinced by their performing the twelve miles in less than two hours. We observed a great extent of bog to the southward, connected with the bog of Allen; the soil in general appeared to be light, and the cultivation of it very indifferent.

Ballinasloe is a considerable town; at its autumnal fair, it is calculated to receive ten thousand visitors, the price of whose beds varies from sixpence to a guinea per night.

The farming society of Ireland have a very good house here, with admirable accommodations for the company, and ample convenience for the reception and exhibition of stock. The arrangement of the prize cattle is perfectly well conducted. The order and regularity of

230 *Exhibition of Sheep at the Fair.*

the meeting is extremely suitable, not only to the purpose of business, but that of conviviality also.

We lost no time in finding out Mr. Dix, and our kind friend Mr. Radcliffe, who had secured us beds at the house of the catholic priest. The display of the first day consisted of sheep assembled in Lord Clancarty's park. The whole were driven in before ten o'clock the preceding night, and the sale is considered to be over by ten the following morning, when driving them out commences. From sixty to eighty thousand sheep, worth from forty shillings to four guineas and upwards each, were here collected on a space not exceeding one hundred acres; but the beautiful inequalities of the ground on which the flocks were shown, exposed the whole to great advantage. The noise and uproar was excessive, yet amidst all this apparent hurry and confusion great order prevailed. Not a dog is permitted to be present—the whole business is ably performed by the shepherds, who are surprisingly dexterous. As we entered the park two flocks had met, of very unequal strength: the most powerful one forced a passage directly through the other flock, breaking the line, and threatening the

weaker animals with total destruction; this, however, was prevented by the activity of the shepherds, for before they had reached the turnpike, at the distance of little more than a mile, the inferior flock was again perfectly collected.

The line of drift is principally by the Athlone road, and, considering the numbers which pass, the losses sustained are trifling; and these arise chiefly from their being kidnapped in towns, or driven over by carriages. The shepherds are entitled to great praise for their alacrity, care, and vigilance. If a sheep separate from any of the flocks, it is immediately caught and brought back in an instant. Independently of an opportunity being afforded to us of seeing and examining every flock distinctly, the appearance of the whole so beautifully disposed was a grand spectacle.

The Irish sheep, though possessing more spirit and action than the Leicester, much resemble that breed; the form of the Irish is supposed to have been much improved by crossing with the best rams of the Leicester: the flavor of their mutton is good, and they attain a great size. There were several lots of wethers sold for above four guineas each,

232 *Inspection of Stock in Society's Yard.*

though the average price did not much exceed three pounds.

After spending two hours in this animating field, we returned to inspect the stock in the Society's yard; of which the specimens of various breeds were numerous, and all well arranged. Lord Farnham and the Bishop of Kilmore's Devons could hardly be surpassed in any county in England. We observed also some very good Herefords: Mr. M'Gill's attracted particular attention, and among the long-horned cattle were as fine samples of the breed as I had ever before seen.

The regulations of the society in the premium given for bulls are calculated to be highly beneficial to the country, by disseminating the best breeds among the farmers of small, as well as of large, occupations. The premium bulls cover gratis, and must serve a certain number of cows to be entitled to the rewards, which are very liberal. In consequence of this excellent rule, no one is precluded from improving his stock, and within the two last years the cattle of the country have received great improvements. Of the Leicester, South-down, and Merino sheep, there were also many good specimens.

To one of the society's regulations I think a material objection may be taken. The certificates of the ages of the stock are delivered on *oath* by the bailiffs! There is something in the exaction of a sacred affirmation on this occasion which does not comport with my feelings: if the protestation of the servant, sanctioned by the principal, whose honor is pledged, be not sufficient to prevent improper claims, I should have little reliance on an extra-judicial oath, punishable only by contempt; which would equally attach to an unattested declaration. The practice any where would be highly objectionable; but in Ireland, where the word of honour is held in such high respect, it seems extraordinary that an oath should be required.

The company assembled were very numerous; one hundred and sixty gentlemen sat down to dinner, the expenses of which were moderate. At a fixed hour the party broke up; and a supper, for those who were inclined to partake of it, was prepared in a room below. I never was present at a better conducted assembly—where more spirit seemed to prevail, or more solicitude was manifested to promote the great object for which they had met, that of furthering the patriotic labors of the institution, from which the most important

234 *Number of Sheep and Cattle at the Fair.*

advantages to Ireland may reasonably be expected to result. Adieu.

J. C. C.

P. S. I have recently procured an account of sheep and horned cattle brought to this fair from the year 1790, which I have the pleasure to enclose:—

Return of the Number of Sheep and Horned Cattle Sold and Un-sold, at the Great October Fairs of Dunlo, or Ballinasloe, for twenty-four years, from 1790 to 1813, inclusive.

Years.	SHEEP.			HORNED CATTLE.		
	Sold.	Un-sold.	Total.	Sold.	Un-sold.	Total.
1790	59,231	2,700	61,931	7,782	850	8,632
1791	64,227	3,000	67,227	6,862	1,300	8,162
1792	61,120	6,911	68,031	6,858	671	7,529
1793	62,272	6,112	68,384	6,695	1,121	7,816
1794	64,580	2,895	67,475	7,106	231	7,337
1795	65,755	2,492	68,247	6,565	1,431	7,996
1796	68,095	2,456	70,551	5,989	300	6,289
1797	66,948	4,300	71,248	5,804	396	6,200
1798	64,700	9,451	74,151	6,931	700	7,631
1799	74,175	3,762	77,937	5,100	4,057	9,157
1800	67,007	3,379	70,386	5,275	2,474	7,749
1801	57,634	21,618	79,252	5,532	4,211	9,743
1802	75,927	8,571	84,498	6,232	3,512	9,744
1803	53,900	33,782	87,682	6,125	599	6,724
1804	78,843	8,621	87,464	5,339	3,462	8,801
1805	79,988	4,366	84,354	7,101	3,003	10,104
1806	64,222	23,171	87,393	5,158	7,082	12,190
1807	76,154	4,808	80,962	6,172	2,396	8,568
1808	80,483	2,316	82,799	7,951	1,376	9,327
1809	75,338	1,610	76,948	7,622	835	8,457
1810	69,481	21,520	91,001	5,331	1,727	7,259
1811	73,420	23,069	96,489	6,592	870	7,462
1812	81,394	2,135	83,529	7,348	2,633	9,981
1813	76,218	870	77,088	8,715	553	9,268

LETTER LIX.

Athlone, Oct. 5, 1813.

AMONG the pleasures of yesterday, I must not overlook that of my being introduced to Mr. Garnett, a very respectable gentleman in his eighty-fourth year. In the course of the last sixty-four years he had attended Ballinasloe fair sixty-three times. The opportunity of resorting to such a living chronicle, promised a rich treat to an agricultural amateur, as, in that period, the changes which he had witnessed must have been very striking. Though much of this gentleman's attention had been devoted to stock, yet the alterations had been so gradual and progressive, as not to have made such impression on his mind as I had been led to expect. He admitted that the augmentation in point of value, with other causes, had increased the price of cattle nearly four-fold; but he was not prepared to allow that so much had been gained in size and symmetry of the several breeds as I had supposed, and indeed it is probable that this improve-

ment is only of recent date. The general face and state of the country, he observed, was entirely altered, and bore no resemblance to what it was in his early youth, when the lands were unenclosed, and little grain of any description was produced. The noise and bustle of the place precluded my obtaining that extent of valuable information, which this venerable gentleman was so competent and obligingly ready to afford; I became, however, perfectly satisfied, that little attention was formerly paid to the objects connected with the husbandry of the country.

This day and the succeeding are the horse fairs. The ability of the Irish horses in leaping is surprisingly great. The custom here is to leap the horses shown for sale into the pound, which is surrounded by a stone wall, five feet high on the upper, and six on the lower side. Many went over the lower part, and in some instances over both. Were I to communicate the feats I saw performed, I might hazard a similar reproof to that of the late Bishop of Killala, Dr. Law, to Lord D——, who in speaking of his alert regiment of volunteer cavalry, asserted that he had brought them to such perfection, that in charging and clearing a six foot wall, the line would not be put into the least

disorder! "That, my Lord," exclaimed the Bishop, "is indeed a wonderful bounce!"

We spent some time in a further inspection of the stock, which greatly surpassed my expectation, as I must confess, that I never saw, at any show, better specimens of the most valuable breeds of cattle.

In the course of the morning we rode to the ground on which the battle of Aghrim was fought; the conflict which finally extinguished the hopes of the Stuarts. James was in himself so devoid of every trait which could create attachment or respect, that his fall calls forth not one sentiment of commiseration.

Near this spot we had an opportunity of seeing two hundred oxen, the property of Major Kirwan. In point of size they were remarkably equal, and very neat cattle in appearance; short in the leg, well formed in the carcase, and of a description not commonly driven to market. Two thousand pounds were offered for one hundred of them, by Sir A. Bryan; and refused, guineas being the price demanded; which I have little doubt would be obtained. Major Kirwan occupies some hundreds of acres of grazing land, worth four pounds per acre.

I was much concerned at quitting Ballinasloe before the conclusion of the meeting; as I should have been pleased to have seen the prizes awarded. The business of the institution is ably conducted, and has, and will continue to produce the most important public benefits. The decision of the judges, however impartial and correct, it is impossible to expect should be agreeable to all parties; it is on this point dissatisfaction and disunion generally has arisen, and, however to be lamented, it is I fear unavoidable.

Great and respectful regard is paid to strangers; no occasion of polite attention towards us was neglected; nor can I, in terms adequate to my feelings, express how sensibly I was gratified by the distinguished compliment I received on being elected an honorary member of the institution.

We dined at Lord Clonbrock's, whose residence is about five miles from Ballinasloe; the mansion is new, and the grounds laid out in the modern style. The country is too flat to be beautiful; the mode of husbandry stands in great need of improvement. The grazing land lets from three to five pounds, the arable from forty to fifty shillings the acre. An excessive repetition of corn crops prevails, and though

Difficulty of returning from Ballinasloe. 239

the stock on the farms is abundant and valuable, no winter provision of green crops is attempted.

Difficult as we had found it to reach Ballinasloe, never had it occurred that any trouble could attend our departure; but this confidence was misplaced: not a carriage, nor even post-horse, could be procured; every possible exertion proved ineffectual, till at length my catholic host obligingly undertook the task, and after some time reported that he had procured me a man and horse to be ready at four o'clock the next morning. The engagement was punctually observed. I was prepared not to expect an inimitable nag, but any thing like the poor beast produced, I confess, had not entered into my contemplation. The miserable animal was the picture of famine, and laboring under a complication of maladies. I could not help expressing my apprehension that the half-starved creature would die on the road—"Never fear, your honor, he is better than he looks," replied the owner; and having no alternative I mounted. The distressing efforts to accomplish two miles reconciled me to the determination of dismounting, and proceeding on foot; when, most fortunately, a carriage with the coachman alone on the barouche seat, came in sight; I at

240 *Mr. Garnett's Resistance of a Footpad.*

once decided to make my case known, and take the chance of being permitted to mount with the driver. I rode up to the window, and, addressing myself to the gentleman, stated, that I had never in my life been a candidate for a place till this moment, when, from a combination of disappointments, I was nearly reduced to the necessity of walking, and as this ill suited with my engagements, I should feel highly obliged to obtain a place on the barouche seat. As I suspected, the parties became amused with the style of my application, and the manner in which I was appointed. I doubt not I should have succeeded with any Irish gentleman, but I became perfectly secure of my object on being recognized by Mr. Garnett. In the course of our drive, I learned an interesting anecdote of the spirit with which the old gentleman, to whom I had become so much obliged, had conducted himself. On returning the preceding year from Ballinasloe, he was attacked by a footpad; the man stopped the carriage, and presented a pistol; Mr. Garnett refused to deliver his money, though he had only a stick with which to defend himself. The villain fired and wounded him in the face, which, however, did not prevent a continuance of his resistance, until some persons fortunately

came up and seized the man, who was afterwards tried and executed for the crime.

The whole of our path was so crowded with sheep, that I do not think there were a hundred yards clear, at any time, during the whole way; and as the road is narrow, it required the greatest care to avoid doing them injury.

I forgot to state that, after getting through the turnpike, I was stopped by a poor fellow who appeared in great agitation. The innocence and earnestness with which he made inquiries after his brindled cow, of one, who by no possibility could afford him the least information, marks the extreme simplicity which characterizes the peasantry of this country, while his apparent distress interested me much, in spite of the vexation I was at the moment enduring. My only surprise was, that in so prodigious a bustle and throng, greater losses did not occur.

Our journey was very pleasant; after making my best acknowledgments for the accommodation so kindly afforded me, I proceeded to the inn where our horses were left.

This visit to Ballinasloe afforded us great entertainment; and we should gladly have protracted it, had not an engagement to Baron's Court compelled us to leave the fair sooner than we could have wished. Having breakfasted, we are about to set off. Ever yours, adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER LX.

Baron's Court, Oct. 6, 1813.

OUR first stage of ten miles was to Ballamona: the road is nearly parallel to that which we had travelled from Edgeworth's Town, but leads through a country more undulated and diversified. From the rising grounds the views were often extensive. The soil is light, and the fences good; but the husbandry in general was very indifferently conducted. In two instances only small patches of turnips were observed, though the surface is particularly well adapted to their growth; while the luxuriance of some parts through which we passed appeared to be so great, as to require the incontrovertible evidence of seeing to become satisfied of the fact.

A portion of Lord Sunderlin's estate, at Springles, has been let for the last eight years in con-acres, at eight pounds each; during which period these lands had produced three crops of potatoes in succession without manure, and were afterwards succeeded by five crops of oats, the last of which was the most productive.

244 *Extraordinary Fertility of the Soil.*

How much longer this land is capable of enduring such treatment remains to be proved: so long, however, as the rent can be procured, the land will have no rest, but continue to be let in the present mode. Parts of other estates in this district are let in the same way. My information was derived from Mr. Bertie, the land agent to Lord Sunderlin, on whose correctness I can rely. I was by no means surprised at this information, as I have frequently met with instances of the same extraordinary fertility; and have much regretted that I have not had an opportunity of examining the nature of the land so occupied. The soil of Sprigles is a deep loam; the substratum, a limestone gravel. I was much struck with the strength of the stubbles on the lands adjoining this property. To the limekilns in the neighbourhood may possibly be attributed a great portion of the luxuriance of the crops, the general management being incompetent to the effect, and deserving great reprobation.

A considerable number of gentlemen's seats appeared in this line, with extensive plantations about some of them. We were greatly perplexed by the sheep on the road, an inconvenience which attended us for more than thirty miles, but which, however, afforded us an ample

opportunity of inspecting the flocks. The cross with the Leicester is very observable, and has evidently improved the form of the Irish sheep: their average weight is now about thirty pounds a quarter. Many of the flocks must have travelled a great distance in the last few days; and though the road was wet, they had not suffered so much as I should have expected from such rapid driving, which may be owing to their native activity and spirit.

Whilst we were stopping to refresh our horses, Mr. Garnett arrived. He said he remembered almost the whole of this country without hedges, very thinly inhabited, and that the state of the working classes was now more comfortable than in ancient times he had known them. The changes in eighty years have undoubtedly been great, and have infinitely augmented the luxuries among the higher ranks; but unless it be that the introduction of the potatoe has prevented the lower orders from starving, I cannot, from what I have observed, see how it is possible their condition should be improved, when it is not easy to conceive rational beings to exist under greater privations than they at present endure.

We had fifteen miles from Ballamona to Ba-

ron's Court, over a soil of sharp gravel. We passed an estate on which we observed several new farm-houses, with the necessary appendant buildings for enabling the occupiers to conduct their business with profit and regularity. Till the farmer is duly supplied with barns and sheds for his cattle, his attempting the growth of green crops, or to increase the quantity of his manure, would be unavailing.

Lord Sunderlin's park, two miles from Baron's Court, is a very pretty piece of ground, its surface being very agreeably unequal, and ornamented with some fine timber and beautiful thorns. The Grand Canal from Dublin passes by the park walls. The inland traffic in most parts of Ireland is insufficient at present to render canals a lucrative investment; large sums have, however, been voted in aid of such undertakings in various parts of Ireland; and I trust the time is not very remote when these patriotic designs will answer the promised object of the original projectors. Many people were employed in extending the cut with the *lay*, at which I was somewhat surprised; but on inquiry, found their spades had not arrived, and that the *lay* was used only to mark out the line: the laborers were unanimous in allowing the English spade to be the superior implement,

Lord Sunderlin is a warm advocate for the education of the subordinate classes : he has built a neat school for the use of his tenantry, which we found very well conducted. Over the door is this inscription—"Opened December, 1807, for the cheap and easy instruction of children of all religious denominations." One hundred boys and eighty girls are the present complement under tuition.

The Lancastrian plan was attempted, and failed. The order and method introduced among the children alarmed the parents : they thought it partook of military discipline, and was a scheme to entice or entrap them into the army : they objected also to their children being made monitors, erroneously conceiving that their own time and learning were sacrificed to the teaching of others. Preposterous as such notions may appear to the casual and better informed observer, the feelings of the parties should first be entertained before a fair judgment can be formed of their objection : this would only lead to a review of the calamities of the past, and be unavailing : let us hope a happier period may soon arrive, when the present sorrows and resentments shall be forgotten. Catholic parents ought to have every assurance that no interference will be

attempted in the religious persuasion of their children. The design ought to be clearly explained—that of qualifying the rising generation to understand with precision, and discharge with fidelity, their several duties. This would generally answer every purpose, as many others, as well as myself, have found, who have taken the trouble to place this point beyond the reach of suspicion. When and wherever the narrow principle of exclusion has been adopted, the system has failed; while the promiscuous education of all religious sects is a powerful auxiliary in weakening prejudice, and approximating Christians of all denominations.

A mile beyond the school brought us to Baron's Court. The house is a very large, handsome, modern building; the domain spacious, and adorned with much fine timber, planted by his Lordship's grand-father, about eighty years ago, under the shade of which the laurel grows here luxuriantly. At the entrance of the park is a beautiful church, erected at the charge of the present noble possessor: its architecture is particularly deserving attention. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER LXI.

Baron's Court, Oct. 7, 1813.

THE principal part of this morning was occupied in driving round the grounds, and examining the plantations. The larches here are remarkably fine trees; I have seldom seen any larger, though the person who planted them has been dead only a few years. A larch of thirty-six years' growth only was sixty feet in height; at four and a half feet from the ground, it measured six feet in circumference. I understood that the evergreen shrubs had been originally planted with the forest trees; by which means they become so established as to bear cutting, and form a most beautiful underwood.

At the extremity of the grounds is a small lake, the boundary of which has been so well managed by judicious planting, as to hide the low boggy margin, and to exhibit the opposite shore, which, being handsome and bold, with the presence of the water, adds great beauty to the place.

Lord Sunderlin himself has been a great planter. An avenue of trees, leading to the church, is happily contrived, by planting shrubs and low trees within the rows, to form a bank, which gradually rises on each side from the humble rose to the majestic lofty beech. The inside of the church at once displays both elegance and simplicity. By the side of the communion table the reading desk is placed, which brings the whole congregation within the view of the minister. The windows are glazed with ground glass, which creates a dead and sombre light, very appropriate to the character of the edifice. A mausoleum adjoining the church is erecting for the family; and at a short distance is the parsonage house, exhibiting every appearance of comfort.

In the whole of these arrangements, as well as in every other part of the establishment, appear indications of order and benevolent consideration, as pleasing to the eye as gratifying to the heart.

Mr. Bertie, the land agent, has made great improvements in the farm; potatoes are set by the plough, and with its assistance kept perfectly clean. Two sorts are cultivated—white, for culinary purposes, and black, for feeding

cattle; the latter must be very prolific, as their produce is estimated at three thousand stones the Cunningham acre; the common mode of planting potatoes in lazy beds does not produce one half the crop which is obtained by the plough: this at length has become so apparent, that many of the neighbouring small occupiers have been prevailed on to abandon their customary practice. On his Lordship's farm are raised very abundant crops of turnips by drilling in the seed on a peat soil after claying; I could perceive nothing to disapprove in the culture, but insufficient hoeing, which has been a general defect in every turnip crop we have inspected. The soil is so productive and profitable here under grass, that there is little inducement to pay particular attention to the arable parts of it: hence a natural consequence, the former is well understood, the latter conducted with perfect ignorance, and as if unentitled to consideration; which to us has always appeared extraordinary, where lands let, as in this district, from three to four pounds per acre. Vast numbers of cattle are fattened in this neighbourhood: twenty pounds a head were paid for his Lordship's cattle to fatten, in October, which afterwards sold for forty pounds each in April. This profit, however, is double what is commonly obtained; the gain in

252 *The English Spade preferred by the Irish.*

general on each not exceeding ten pounds. Mr. Bertie has introduced the valuable practice of letting out work by the task, or job, to the laborers, who always, in such cases, petition for an English spade; but when they work by the day, they cannot be induced to abandon the lay or shovel. The wages paid here by his Lordship are twelve pence a day for nine months, and nine pence for the other three; much above the general rate of the country; which may be estimated at seven pence and eight pence: half a guinea is paid for cutting an acre of grain, and four shillings for mowing the same surface of hay. The cartage of turf in the spring interferes very much with all the arable operations of a farm, as a large portion of that valuable season which ought to be devoted to preparing for the green crops is thus unavoidably lost. The enormous turf stacks bear testimony of the labor in digging, drying, and transporting this species of fuel from the bogs; the subsequent delivery of which to different parts of the house in winter, occupies the time of several persons: when the canal is completed, it is the general opinion that coal will be found a more economical fuel. Rents have doubled in the last thirty years; and tithes have, probably, been proportionably increased. The composition for wheat and barley

is twelve shillings, oats eight shillings, hay six shillings (near towns ten shillings), and flax sixteen shillings the acre. In some instances the tithes on wheat and flax have reached twenty shillings the acre. In Leinster, potatoes do not pay tithe. The composition on all other produce must, however, be considered as exorbitant; and while it has a prohibitory operation on the production of corn by large farmers, it becomes oppressive, in the highest degree, on small occupiers, who can employ the principal part of their land in no other way. The annual value of ecclesiastical property in Ireland would suffer great reduction, were the number of small occupations consolidated into proper farms, of one or two hundred acres each, which would enable tenants with capital to restore the present lands under the plough to grass, and by this means avoid the increasing demands of the clergy, and the tyrannous exactions of the proctors.

It is curious to refer to the state of opinions respecting the husbandry of Ireland a hundred years ago. About this period Dean Swift, in his *Drapier's Letters*, complains of the advance of rents, and the depopulation, as likely to be consequent on converting so much arable land into grazing farms. Little was it conjectured

254 *Sufferings of the People during a Scarcity.*

at that time that the great source of injury to the country, so evident at this day, and so feelingly and justly deplored, should arise out of the opposite system, which, at that period, was so much reprobated.

From Mr. Bertie I received a very afflicting account of the sufferings endured by the working classes, two years ago, during a scarcity, produced by a failure of the potatoe crop. The nobility and gentry of the country contributed most liberally towards obtaining from other districts a supply of food, and the people were highly sensible of this kindness. He knew of but one laborer who declined receiving relief; the singularity of the exception caused some curiosity, as the party had many children and no visible means of supplying their wants. It was at length discovered, that this good man had refused to receive any relief, from an idea of degrading himself and his family! esteeming the sufferings of hunger more supportable, by the descendants of one of the ancient princes of Ireland, than the dishonor of pauperism!

An honorable feeling sufficiently powerful to endure the privation of food, not only individually, but extending to his offspring, however mistaken, and to be lamented, must call

A singular Instance of Family Pride. 255

forth respect and admiration of sentiments so noble and praise-worthy! Birth would indeed be enviable; did it inspire corresponding notions and produce like effects; in all who had its distinguished advantages to boast

Solitary instances are now and then to be met with, but I have no reason to believe that the dissatisfaction of the people, generally speaking, arises from the recollection of ancient claims; nor do I believe this sentiment has the weight of a feather in the scale of their happiness.

Near Baron's Court is the estate of an absentee: if I had needed an instance of the ruinous consequences arising from this cause, I had now one before me!

About a mile from Baron's Court, on the road to Ballymona, there is a circle planted with very fine elms; its novelty produced an inquiry as to the use for which it had been intended? and I found in reply, it was to mark the termination of the daily family drive in the ponderous coach and six, for the benefit of the air!

The accommodation and other numerous advantages derived in modern times from the

improvement of roads, is not among the least of the conveniences, I might say blessings, of the present day. Though Dublin is not sixty miles distant from Bacon's Court, his Lordship's grand-father was three days on the road, and to accomplish the journey even within that time, was then considered as a very great exertion.

The library is extensive and valuable, containing, among other curious books, the entire collection of the late Mr. Edmund Malone—his Lordship's brother. The gardens are very large, and under admirable management. Of the various luxuries of which Ireland has to boast, fruit cannot generally be included. I shall most probably have an opportunity of addressing you again from this place, till when, adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER LXII.

Baron's Court, Oct. 8, 1813.

WE drove this morning to Wilson's hospital, most delightfully situated between Lough O'Whel, and Lough Deneveragh. As we ascended the hill on which the hospital is erected, we had a charming view of Lough O'Whel, and Lord De Blacquire's seat; the scenery of this part of the lake is very beautiful.

The prospect from the hospital extends into five counties, and over Lough Deverish—this spot is considered to be the centre of Ireland. The revenues of the hospital are upwards of four thousand pounds a year, applicable to the support of one hundred and fifty boys, and twenty old men; the building is large, commodious, and well adapted to the objects of the institution. The Rev. — Radcliffe presides over the establishment; throughout every department of which, we were highly gratified in

observing the greatest order and neatness to prevail; not less commendable than creditable to those intrusted with its superintendence. Doctor Bell's system of education is here pursued. The children are admitted from ten to twelve years of age, and they remain for three years; when they are apprenticed to some handicraft trade: the apprentice fee, which the governors have now in contemplation to increase, is at present but five pounds: the children acquitted themselves very well, both in reading and accounts. Coercion is rarely resorted to; for where a sense of shame fails to produce the desired effect in young minds, little amendment can be expected from any other kind of punishment. Few instances have occurred of any of the children conducting themselves so ill as to compel their expulsion. Steady uniformity, and well established order, soon procure that implicit obedience which is one of the most valuable principles of the new system; the happy and salutary effects of which appear in the cheerful compliance and content of the pupils. The garden, which is extensive, is in a great measure cultivated and managed by the children, engrafting, by this more active appropriation of their time, a certain degree of labor and industry, on recreation and amusement.

I should imagine it might be further advantageous to teach the boys, as is the practice at the military academy, to make their own clothes, which would employ those hours in which the weather may preclude work in the garden.

The establishment is so well conducted, and so calculated to be eminently useful, that it is not possible to inspect it without feelings of the highest admiration of the philanthropy that dictated the bequest; yet it is not possible but to lament the want of liberality which restricted its benefits to one religious persuasion—that of the protestants—by which regulation six out of seven of Mr. Wilson's countrymen are excluded the benefit of his munificence.

That every individual possessing property has an undoubted right to dispose of it agreeably to his will and inclination, conformably to the laws cannot be questioned; nor do I mean to pass the least uncandid or disrespectful reflection on the memory of the benevolent founder; but to express my strong disapprobation of the narrow, merciless bigotry, which not only fostered and promoted the most uncharitable prejudices of Christians against each

260 *Meet Mr. Garnett again at the Hospital.*

other, but which has been reproachfully encouraged and supported by the legislature of the country. What misery has not this wretched policy inflicted on four millions of our fellow subjects, and how severely at this moment do they feel its unjust operation! A total obliteration of all invidious distinctions should be a self-imposed task on every well-wisher to the country; the practice of this virtuous sentiment would by degrees have its due influence, and highly contribute to the general happiness of every rank and denomination of the people.

We again met Mr. Garnett at the hospital: he was engaged at backgammon, and I was much pleased at the spirit and activity with which, at the age of eighty-four, he contested the game. In another route we pursued, on our return to Baron's Court, we saw, about a mile from the hospital, a new church recently finished, and near it was another charter school.

The surface of the country over which we passed was much broken, and the soil, as usual, greatly superior to its cultivation. That there should still be advocates for the old practice of planting potatoes in lazy beds, which here pre-

vailed, is only to be reconciled by recollecting that all errors have their champions; yet the manifest advantages attending the use of the plough in this culture, not only in planting, gathering, and in producing a greater return, but in their superior flavor, by being freed from wet, which in most seasons occasions great loss and injury; would, it might reasonably be expected, have been sufficient inducements, long ago, to have produced more converts, to a practice so evidently beneficial. Where the plough, however, is injudiciously used, there is a danger in cleaning the rows, if delayed too long; as without care the lateral shoots may receive some injury; in which case the plants shoot downward, and the produce is always reduced in size. In one instance, I remember to have incurred great loss from a late operation of this kind, and was not aware of the cause until it was discovered by subsequent experience. An open channel for the escape of the water being constantly preserved, is another material recommendation to the use of the plough; as it not only preserves the manure, but benefits the present and future crops in a high degree. A mistaken notion generally prevails, that potatoes ought not to be taken up until the haum begins to decay. As soon as the skin is sufficiently hard and

fixed to bear the friction of gathering and removing to the pit without injury, the crop may be safely harvested. I am perpetually obliged to store potatoes in large quantities, though wet and dirty; but as care is always taken to have a strong current of air passing over the heap, the effect of fermentation is carried off, and the moisture, which otherwise would remain and cause decay, is dissipated. The earth adhering to the potatoes is of service; for when it becomes dry, it contributes to their keeping.

We passed over the bridge at Ballycock, for which the country, in a great measure, is indebted to Lord Sunderlin: a communication is thus opened with Granard, and the inhabitants of a large extent of country, no longer under the necessity of carrying their produce five or six miles round the head of the lake. Such appropriation of fortune, and exertions of influence to promote public convenience, are highly honorable, and in the end often prove as beneficial to the patriotic designer and promoter as to the community.

Near the bridge is a farm of his Lordship's, where we first saw cattle sheds, in the occupation of a farmer. We quit this delightful

place to-morrow, highly gratified with all we have seen, and all we have heard. A few such resident proprietors would soon give to Ireland a very different aspect. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER LXIII.

Ardbracken House, Oct. 10, 1813.

WE reached this kind, hospitable roof yesterday to a late dinner. The journey was long and fatiguing for our horses, as a part of the road was hilly, and the distance from Baron's Court little short of fifty English miles. Our first point was Mullingar, eight miles—the land immediately surrounding the town is equal in fertility to the best we have seen in Ireland: the remaining stubbles bore incontestable evidence of weighty crops, and the management of some of the farms seemed to be tolerably good.

From an eminence too miles short of Mullingar, we had a most extensive and beautiful view of both Lough O'Whel and Lough Eunel, and could distinguish the woods at Mr. Rochfort's at Belvidere, which has the celebrity of being one of the most enchanting spots in Ireland; we were, however, at too great a distance to

form any judgment of the beauty for which it is so extolled.

Mullingar is a town of some extent; the principal street is above a mile in length, and the houses are generally good; but the quantity of dirt and filth before the doors did not prepossess us in favor of the place; possibly we saw it, in this respect, to a disadvantage, owing to recent rain and great passage of sheep from Ballinasloe. As the grand canal to Dublin passes the town, we had an opportunity of seeing one of the passage boats; the accommodations were good, and we understood its progress to be about six miles an hour.

This neighbourhood has recently been disgraced by the banditti mentioned in a former letter, who style themselves *carders*; and although punishment has overtaken several of the offenders, these outrages still continue.

At Mullingar, we quitted the direct road to Dublin, and pursued that leading to Athboy: we breakfasted at Reynella, the seat of Mrs. Reynell, five miles from Mullingar. At Kilburn, two miles before we reached Reynella, we were agreeably surprised by the sight of

some fine Herefordshire oxen, and a few acres of turnips, which had been indifferently hoed, and were greatly injured by being left too thick on the ground.

Reynella, the seat of Mrs. Reynell, has not been built more than twenty years—great taste has been exhibited in the plantations, and in forming a piece of water. Mr. Reynell, in his day, was esteemed one of the most spirited improvers in Ireland, and his example had an extensive effect. The premature death of a gentleman possessing so high a character was justly considered a public loss. He increased the demand for labor, and thus created a spirit of industry highly beneficial to the lower orders who entertained a due sense of their obligations, and acknowledged them with gratitude. This gentleman was always respected by them as their adviser, friend, and benefactor. After his death, Mrs. Reynell pursued the same system of improvement; and at the time when the rebellion first made its appearance, she was actively and anxiously employed in completing a sheet of water which had given employment to a great number of people. Conscious that the interests and happiness of the laboring classes in her neighbourhood had never been

neglected, but always kindly attended to, she confided in the gratitude of some, and the common sense of others, that they would not destroy what it was so much their interest to preserve.

This Lady had the intrepidity to remain in her mansion, and putting arms into the hands of her servants, and being otherwise prepared in case of emergency to protect her property, was resolved to wait the event. The veneration and attachment of the people proved her complete protection and defence, as she sustained not the slightest loss or injury of any description.

This circumstance furnishes another instance of Irishmen, who, though feeling no respect for the laws of the country, and thoroughly disregarding every personal consequence that might attach to the violation of them, were yet gratefully alive to the remembrance of obligations, and revolted at the idea of repaying their benefactors by lawless and inconsiderate violence. A people, on whom consideration and kindness have such influence, are more to be pitied than condemned, when acting wrong. Where many and real griev-

ances exist, in any community, it cannot be surprising that they should be exaggerated, which, when fomented by mischievous parties, lead to the fatal adoption of measures for redress, that in the end do but augment the sufferings previously endured.

The farming buildings and offices at Reynella are judicious and extensive, and the management of the land is superior to most specimens of husbandry we have had an opportunity of examining. A certain portion of the farm is devoted to the growth of green crops, which were well managed, and great pains bestowed in cleaning the ground—the clovers grown with ray grass were luxuriant—the stock well selected, and excellent—the Hereford oxen were equal to the best I have usually seen. An ox, a descendant of one of the Woburn bulls, much resembled the far-famed bull, bred by the late Duke of Bedford, and was a very fine specimen of the breed. The Leicester flock was a choice collection of the breed of sheep from that county. Ten pounds of clover, and twenty-seven pounds of ray grass, are sown per Irish acre: had a less quantity of ray grass been used, the crops of clover would have been better. Potatoes were principally cultivated

in lazy beds. Is it not wonderful that the production of a crop, which may be considered as the staff of life in Ireland, should at this day be so little understood?

Mr. Reynell, about twenty years since constructed a water meadow of fourteen acres: the work was judiciously performed, but it is at present a little out of repair. Early in May the grass is cut for hay, by which practice the depasturage for at least a month or five weeks, up to the time of cutting, is lost—an important consideration where there is so much stock, and an inadequate supply of green food. The produce of an acre of Swedish turnips preserved till May in Cumberland, may be valued at forty or fifty pounds, on a comparison with hay. The young stock bred on the farm are very promising, and do great credit to the bailiff, who has lived very many years in the family, and appears to unite great practical knowledge as a farmer, with much zeal and an ardent attachment to the persons and interests of his employers.

The survey of this establishment afforded me much pleasure: great indeed was the loss of the proprietor who originally projected the system which has been persevered in, during a

long minority, with so much ability and spirit. I cannot but feel a peculiar desire that the young gentleman, who is now nearly of age, may be inspired with the same motives, and influenced by the same philanthropy, that directed the conduct of his patriotic father; and that the regret for his loss, and the respect for the memory of such a parent, may stimulate him with an ambitious emulation of worthily supplying his place.

To Athboy, eleven miles, the country is well enclosed. Two instances were presented to us of the turnip husbandry. The crops of grain appeared to have been good, and the tillage of the land tolerably well conducted. An abundance of limestone gravel was observed in all parts of our drive.

Notwithstanding the fertility of the soil, and its great returns to the occupiers, the condition of the laborers upon it seemed to bear no relation or affinity to either: extreme privation and poverty were the evident indelible characters of their pitiable situation. I attempted to enter one of their wretched cabins, but the smoke was so dense and offensive, I could not remain in it so long as to distinguish one object from another, and yet a sufficient time

to awaken every compassionate reflection—that human and rational beings, possessing intellect and feelings, perhaps that would not disgrace the higher ranks of society, should be compelled to exist under circumstances from which humanity revolts, and proclaims a cruelty not to rescue a dog! Fuel being dear and scarce, and cold being less bearable than smoke, the door was kept closed; habit may—nay, does reconcile the latter, whilst the former could not be endured.

From Athboy to Ardbracken is computed eight miles; but I should suppose it to be much more: the soil appeared to be very good, on which there were several extensive farming establishments; and as far as a hasty judgment could be formed, I should select this district as the best specimen of husbandry, speaking generally, that we had seen in Ireland.

The road by Kells is esteemed to be more beautiful; but being somewhat further about, we preferred the shortest line. Wood alone is wanting to make this a most lovely country; and as its growth is prodigious and rapid, the encouragement to plant can nowhere be exceeded. The luxuriant growth of the shrubs was a matter of no less surprise than ad-

miration: I do not know any spot more favorable to every species of vegetation. This has been a very fatiguing, though delightful day; but let me hope that the detail of it may not have proved tiresome to you. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER LXIV.

Ardbracken House, Oct. 11, 1813.

THOUGH Ireland is not subject to poor laws, the county assessments applicable to the repair of the roads and various other purposes form a heavy charge, which is said to be little short of a million yearly. This tax is imposed by the grand jury—the chief constables first obtaining their sanction, which is confirmed by the fiat of the judge.

Great complaints have been made of sinister views pervading the grand juries; and as the prevalence of corruption in the public concerns of Ireland is notorious, the suspicion, whether founded in justice or otherwise, is easily diffused. The administration of distributive justice is loudly arraigned, owing to this important office devolving on insufficient parties, from the number of qualified and unexceptionable characters who as absentees are lost to the country. Latterly, barristers have been appointed to preside at the Quarter Sessions of each county,

274 *Want of Decorum in Irish Courts of Law.*

and much benefit is likely to attend this wise regulation. The proceedings and discussions in the several districts will thus be more analogous, and a more impartial distribution of justice promoted.

The want of solemnity and decorum at the assizes is to be deeply regretted : neither judges nor council appear in their appropriate dress. The dignity and order which is preserved in our courts of law, serve most materially to create veneration and inspire respect in the several orders of the people, and are highly worthy the attention and imitation of the Irish bar. The people in Ireland have long considered a want of interest among the higher ranks as tantamount to criminality : its influence in their opinion can control the operations of the law—can obtain pardon for the commission of the greatest crime ; and no offender suffers condign punishment but the person who is destitute of powerful friends to intercede for him.

A thorough conviction of strict impartiality in the enforcement of the penal statutes, is indispensably requisite to give energy and effect to all civil institutions ; and resort should be

had to every measure which by possibility can tend to establish this confidence in the minds of the people, and raise it in the public estimation.

As an example of the effect which circumstances apparently trivial produce on the mind, may be cited the preparative ceremony of an English judge to his passing sentence of death. He takes from his bag a small black cap, which he deliberately unfolds and places on his head ; this signal announces the impending fate of the criminal. Those who have never witnessed it might suppose that this formality is calculated rather to destroy than promote the awfulness of the occasion ; but the reverse of this conjecture is the fact : the solemn silence which precedes the few minutes in which the judge is thus occupied has a powerful operation on the audience. A general sympathy of feeling is created by the anticipation of the dreadful denunciation a fellow-creature is doomed to receive. The ear and the heart are attuned to the melancholy occasion, and every word which falls from the judge becomes doubly impressive from a union of sentiment.

The humanity with which the criminal law is executed is a bright part of our constitution :

276 *Uneducated Man the Creature of Passion.*

Barbarous as is the penal code, the mildness with which it is administered greatly disarms it of its horrors.

To dilate on the morals of the people of Ireland, would require a more intimate knowledge of their character, and a much longer residence in the country than has been permitted us on the present occasion. Their conduct is frequently marked by the most incredible absurdity and opposite extremes; one hour dignifies the man with every kind and noble sentiment—the next degrades his nature by acts of the most brutal malevolence. Man, uneducated, is the creature of passion; and in his contempt of legal restraint, he feels he has a right to become the avenger of his own wrongs. The instances of savage ferocity, which occasionally occur, operate to the general discredit of the Irish character.

Mr. Arthur Young has furnished a deplorable picture of their moral state in some parts of Ireland, exhibiting the lower orders as so lost to all sense of decency, as to consent to the prostitution of their wives and daughters to their landlords and superiors! This accusation has recently been repeated. In conversations with the well-informed, in various parts of Ire-

land, and particularly a few days since at Balinasloe, with gentlemen from different provinces, I have been uniformly assured that these charges are unfounded, and that the parties who have stated them were grossly imposed on. Examples of profligacy, in this, as in every other large community, undoubtedly may be found; but as a general characteristic of the people I am persuaded the atrocity has no existence. The truth of these stories has been so frequently and so solemnly denied, and disproved by so many corroborating circumstances, that I cannot but reject them as utterly unfounded. All the individuals with whom I have conversed on this subject consider it a gross libel on the Irish character.

In no country are conjugal and parental affections exceeded, more warmly or powerfully felt, or more sincerely and unaffectedly exhibited, than in Ireland: it is these, and these alone, which communicate to the wretched cabin an interest and a charm which recompense the cottier's toil, and compensate all other privations. Is it then possible to credit the existence of such unnatural baseness and dereliction of every virtuous sentiment in characters where the affections of husband and father so conspicuously predominate? And among those

too, with whom a sense, or rather a pride of family honor exists, not less incorruptible than incompatible with so revolting and degrading an acquiescence.

To-morrow we shall bid our valued friends under this hospitable roof farewell, and proceed for Black Castle, whence most probably you will hear from me again. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER LXV.

Black Castle Oct. 12, 1813.

THE pleasure our last visit derived from the unremitting kindness and attention of our friends, and the few chances that so retired a life as mine affords of any future meeting, made our parting yesterday truly painful. Neither time nor distance can ever obliterate the esteem and regard now impressed on my mind; and in the pleasurable review of the various incidents which have contributed to the happiness of this tour, the friendship and urbanity of the amiable residents in Ardbracken House will always occupy a pre-eminent place in my recollection.

Mr. Ruxton's cottage is delightfully situated on the banks of the Boyne, a mile from Navan, where the soil is highly fertile. Mr. Ruxton, though well versed in the best theories of agriculture, yields his better judgment to the erroneous practices of the country, and white crops are grown after each other successively. As an instance of the power of vegetation on this farm,

a field which had borne an admirable crop of wheat, and which was cut in August, was immediately ploughed for another crop of the same grain. The prodigious quantity of grass which it immediately produced caused a delay in sowing the wheat, that the abundant herbage might be fed off with cattle; and it is now re-ploughing for the seed: had I not had an opportunity of seeing it, I should have deemed such a statement apocryphal.

The Swedish turnips were good—the white ones tolerable, though imperfectly hoed and cleaned. Mr. Ruxton stated that it was his intention to put his farm into a regular rotation of cropping, and to give it a proper cleaning: By carrying this wise resolution steadily into effect, he will, by such an example, not only render an essential service to his neighbourhood, but materially benefit himself.

The thriving plantations on Mr. Ruxton's estate are all of his own rearing, and were planted about thirty years ago.

By means of locks in various parts of the river, the Boyne is made navigable from Navan to Drogheda, where the distilleries and a considerable trade in grain have recently made the

former place a respectable corn-market. The high price which wheat has lately borne has induced the growth of it on all kinds of land; and as moderate crops only have indemnified the farmer, such practices may ultimately prove injurious to his interest.

We have been continually subjected to inquiries as to the general disposition of the people to turbulence or tranquillity. Although, as I observed in a former letter, we had no reason to suspect any meditated disturbance of the present repose, yet we were unqualified to pass a general opinion on the real state of the public feeling. Privations to the extent endured in Ireland must produce discontent, the parent of disloyalty and disaffection; and however the great, the glorious work of reform in this most beautiful island may be deferred, it must be seriously undertaken to prevent those fatal consequences which await procrastination. The experience of every hour persuades me that there are no other means of accomplishing this arduous task, and of establishing an unequivocal and perfect satisfaction in the country, than by improving the condition of the working classes. Of the manner in which to a certain extent this blessing may be conferred, I have already offered an opinion, which subsequent

282 *Tranquillity not to be ensured by Coercion.*

information and reflection have furnished no reason to retract. The inefficacy of force has been manifested by the experience of centuries. Coercion, sustained by an overwhelming military power, by depopulating the country, might produce a temporary calm ; but it is the last expedient which ought to be resorted to for the attainment of permanent order, and obedience to the laws and civil authorities.

The violence which appears from time to time in resolutions of catholic meetings, is represented as the artifice of a few designing individuals, who, though so loud in demanding catholic emancipation, dread nothing so much as its being conceded. By concession, their consequence would be extinguished, and their powers would cease with the means possessed of inflaming and influencing the untaught minds of the lower orders. The abrogation of what remains of the penal statutes would demolish the existing barrier which divides the people, and be the happy occasion of removing those mutual jealousies and prejudices which have now so pernicious an effect on the minds of men of both persuasions, and are not less degrading to the nation than injurious to its peace and prosperity.

To Slane's Castle, five miles, some very good farming appeared between that place and Navan. Mr. Ruxton's brother has a fine estate adjoining Black Castle, which is under a good system of husbandry: the thorn hedges are flourishing, and the fields regularly laid down for grazing. About three miles from this property we observed a church, and near to it was a very fine round tower, the top of which was covered with flags.

Highly gratified with the day we have here passed, we purpose starting early in the morning for Drogheda. Ever yours—Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER LXVI.

Drogheda, Oct. 12, 1813.

WITH the first five miles of this morning's journey we were previously acquainted, the farming of which is certainly better than in most districts of Ireland.

Slane's Castle is placed in a romantic situation, surrounded by a great extent of wood; and while it commands a beautiful view of the Boyne and its rocky margin, Mr. Lambert's woods at Beau Park contribute greatly to its embellishment. The village of Slane is neatly built, and entirely new. The quality of the soil between Slane's Castle and Drogheda is of promising appearance: it is a liver-coloured loam, of very superior staple and value, probably alluvial—its cultivation by no means such as it deserved.

Two miles short of Drogheda is the ford where King William passed the Boyne: a rock at the identical spot forms an appropriate base for the pillar erected upon it, to perpetuate the memory of that great event. The homage

paid to King William by a portion of the Irish nation rests not on that foundation which in my opinion principally entitles him to the esteem and respect of posterity. His enlightened policy and liberal views with regard to religion, are the most luminous parts of his character; and greatly is it to be lamented that the bigotry and revengeful prejudices of the times should have defeated his good intentions; for in the succeeding reign intolerance and persecution reached the acme of barbarism.

Drogheda is a handsome commercial town, built on the banks of the Boyne, which rapidly rise from the river. The approach to it is through a street of great length, consisting for the most part of miserable hovels. The principal street, as well as the new houses on the quay, are substantial and handsome. The improvements in the town have been rapid during the last few years. Difficulty attends the access to the port, owing to the winding course of the river down do its fall into the sea and the shallowness of water over the bar, formed by the discharge of its waters. The Corporation possesses a considerable revenue, and large sums have been expended on embanking the river, with a view of deepening the channel: some benefit has been derived from this measure, but

still it requires two tides for vessels, after passing the bar, to reach the quay. To remedy this inconvenience, it has been proposed to make a canal in a straight line to the sea, and by the assistance of sluices a greater depth of water is expected to be obtained. At present, vessels of a small draft of water only can reach the quay at Drogheda.

In consequence of the distilleries having been at work a few days, barley in great quantities was arriving from all quarters. The roads were crowded in all directions with Irish cars, laden with this material for the supply of the manufactories, the importance of which to the state will appear from the following statement.* It

* "The following stills are all at work in this kingdom:—

Thirty-three, producing every twenty-eight days, 893,873 gallons, at 5s. 11d. per gallon, duty 266,299l. 13s. 3½d.—per day, 9,510l. 14s. 0½d.—per hour. 396l. 5s. 7d.—yielding a revenue to Government of (supposing them to work eight months in the year) 2,130,397l. 6s. 4d. Grain required, at the rate of six gallons of spirits for every barrel, amounts to 148,979 barrels, one-third of which must be malt, yielding a revenue of 34,968l. every month, and	
On the eight working months in the year	£270,745 14 0
Which added to the whiskey duty.....	2,130,397 6 4
Makes a total of	£2,410,143 0 4

"The benefits of such a stimulus to agriculture are evident, and would be still more valuable if they were not purchased at the expense of the morals and industry of the lower classes."

may indeed be urged that if the use of ardent spirits were totally prohibited, such is the natural propensity of man to intoxication, that he would become so by beer or some other fermented liquor. Drunkenness, however, so promoted, might possibly be unattended with the like evil consequences to the community which attend inebriation by spirituous liquors, as the exhilaration produced by the former is speedily resolved into a senseless stupor, while that of the latter inspires the inebriated with a dangerous frenzy.

Greatly as agriculture is promoted by the home distillation of grain, the sacrifice of human happiness, health, and morals, is paying too dearly for the benefit derived to husbandry. The yearly advantages accruing to the revenue from the manufacture of legalized poison, leaves little reason to hope for the adoption of such regulations and restrictions on the sale of spirituous liquors, as would place the inordinate use of them out of the reach of the laboring classes. Intemperate gratification in ardent spirits ought, if possible, to be restrained, instead of the law against drunkenness being allowed to sleep, as drinking to excess is the great bane to all the little comforts of the lower orders; and though a perfect conviction of the direful effects too often attendant on inebriety be admitted among

them, yet the indulgence has too many temptations to be resolutely abandoned.

We inspected the distillery of Mr. Codd, which is very extensive. Here we saw the first steam-engine wholly constructed in Ireland; it appeared to work extremely well, and does great credit to the Dublin foundry: the rest of the machinery seemed well adapted to their various offices. The exertions of Mr. Codd in a variety of undertakings have greatly benefited and materially contributed both to the agricultural and mercantile interests of this district.

We visited Mr. Tandy's farm, four miles from Drogheda on the southern bank, and near the mouth of the Boyne, whence we had a complete view of the exit of the river and the proposed line of the canal, which appeared to be a feasible project, and likely, at no considerable expense, to answer a valuable purpose. Should a communication be formed by means of another canal with Lough Neagh and Lough Erne, Drogheda would become a place of great trade, not only in the transportation and exportation of grain, but in other domestic and foreign produce.

Mr. Tandy's farm at Morthington offers much for the gratification of an agricultural

visitor. The clovers were remarkably clean, and sown on land in high condition. Eight pounds of seed are found sufficient, when drilled in, for the Irish acre : if a proof had been required of the rapid and luxuriant growth of clover in Ireland, here were ample demonstrations of the fact. Ten acres of cabbages had been planted, but the season had proved unfavorable to their growth : beside which, there were five acres of Swedish, and five acres of white turnips drilled, well hoed, and very clean. In all, there were twenty acres of green crop—an unusual number on so small a farm. The care and attention bestowed on the crops, and particularly so in their being kept clean, cannot be exceeded, and would entitle Mr. Tandy to the reputation of a good farmer in any country.

Much of this farm had been ploughed until it was exhausted and overrun with weeds : the exertions of the present occupier may be estimated by the presence of some few remains of what at first he had to encounter.

There is infinite pleasure in the survey of a farm under a good system of management in any situation ; but particularly so in a neighbourhood where it is the misconceived practice to do every thing which by possibility can coun-

teract the bounty of Providence, and render the most fertile soil unproductive.

The corn-market at Drogheda is a spacious handsome building. Considerable quantities of all sorts of grain are exported to Liverpool, and some oats are sent by the return of coal ships to Whitehaven. The number of opulent people in Drogheda is considerable, and the society on a good footing.

We had the pleasure of meeting several of the mercantile gentlemen as guests of Mr. Codd. It was extremely pleasing to be a witness of the spirit and confidence with which an augmentation of the commerce of the place was by these gentlemen anticipated. I sincerely hope that their expectations may be realized. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER LXVII.

Collon, Oct. 14, 1813.

WE arrived here this morning to breakfast; and though our distance from Drogheda is but six miles, yet as we have been ascending during the greater part of the way, we perceive our elevation to be considerably above the level of the sea.

The soil has altered greatly for the worse: nothing can be more ungenial to tillage than the ground occupied by Mr. Foster, whose farm is the only one I ever saw that could put me in good humour with my own: the surface of it is a meagre white clay, suffering equally from wet or dry weather. A propitious season for the cultivation of such land but seldom occurs.

It is very unfortunate that Mr. Foster should have had so unimprovable a subject on which to operate, as, with his knowledge and indefatigable exertions, he could not have failed

in exhibiting the advantages of a good system of cultivation on any spot, where it had been practicable. As a planter, he is eminently distinguished; for, in spite of the sterility of the soil, the elevated situation of Collon, and its uninterrupted exposure to the winds from the sea, his plantations grow very luxuriantly.

Collon, a remarkably neat village, was entirely built by Mr. Foster; the cabins are very tidy, the walls white-washed, and the roofs covered with Welsh slate. The church is an extremely handsome building, with a tower of very chaste Gothic. Dr. Beaufort, who was the architect, is now engaged in fitting up the interior, which will be no less elegant than appropriate. At a short distance from the church is a very good parsonage house. A cotton manufactory furnishes employment to many of the inhabitants within its walls, and to others who weave in their own houses; besides which, a Lancastrian school and a dispensary are also established in the village.

Our first object of attention before we rode through the plantations and over the farm, this morning, was the nursery; which was formerly a greater curiosity than at present, as it was one of the first in Ireland. Mr. Foster

found himself compelled either to raise his own seedlings, or to import them from England or Scotland. The nursery contains several acres, and is well arranged and managed. In this seminary I beheld the greatest variety of shrubs, evergreen and deciduous forest trees I have ever seen. Here, with great pains, had been collected every known species of the oak (*quercus*), several of which had been ingrafted with scions from other trees.

In Wales the old English oak is yet to be met with, but very seldom elsewhere: the original sovereign of our groves having been banished by the Norman and Flemish oak, in consequence of their more rapid growth. The acorns of the old English oak have no foot-stalks; and the timber is specifically heavier, when in water, than that of the continental oaks which usurp its place. I should hence infer, that the oak now grown in Ireland is of foreign origin, as it is said to be equally valuable with the English, and to grow much faster; a recommendation arising probably from the same cause which produces such luxuriance and rapidity in the growth of all the trees, with the exception of the beech, which seems to make the least progress. The American tribe of bog plants have been happily introduced with great success; as im-

294 *A most extraordinary Rhododendron.*

mediately beneath the surface of inert white clay is a deep substratum of peat, which is peculiarly suitable to their growth. Throughout the plantations the laurel is interspersed; it thrives well under the forest trees, and makes a most beautiful underwood.

The pavilion, Mr. Foster's former residence, is now occupied by Colonel Foster, who is making very material additions to the place. The peat, here lying very near the surface, gives to all species of plants, that delight in a boggy soil, a most astonishing luxuriance. I measured round the spreading branches of a rhododendron about ten feet high, and found their circumference to be eighty feet. Surprised as I was at the appearance of the plant, I took the dimensions myself that I might speak with confidence as to the fact. I think this shrub, though less lofty, covered more ground than the largest Portugal laurel I ever saw.

Near the pavilion is also a winter garden, containing a greater number of the different species and varieties of shrubs, than, perhaps, are to be found in any collection throughout the empire. Specimens also of the indigenous grasses of Ireland, amounting to the number of eighty-four, have been here collected; the

total number of grasses growing in Ireland is stated at one hundred and sixty-four.

Among the curious forest trees were a weeping larch, and an oak, peculiar to Ireland, that has the same drooping propensity. In short, the prodigious number of trees, shrubs, and plants, which I had never seen before, were infinitely beyond my powers of recollection.

Mr. Foster's botanical knowledge, indefatigable exertions, and skill in all his operations, have rendered him not less a successful than an extensive planter. Above six hundred Irish acres have been covered with wood under this gentleman's superintendence and direction; giving to each acre about three thousand plants. As the forest trees require thinning, their nurses, the pine tribe, are weeded out to allow to the former room to grow and spread.

The most desirable qualifications in a planter are care to protect, and courage to thin! How few do we meet with in whom are combined these requisites! Mr. Foster not only possesses the knowledge of their indispensability, but acts up to the conviction thence arising, and is also in every other respect the best gentleman-manager of nursery grounds, plan-

206 *Weekly Sale of Timber and Brushwood.*

tations, and woods, of any one with whose labors I have had acquaintance.

A sale of timber and brush-wood takes place two days in each week during the greater part of the year. Fir trees of thirty years' growth, sell for two shillings a foot. Brush-wood or faggots, at half a guinea the cart load, or two pence a stone—full as dear as coals at Drogheda. With the value of the bark from the larch, for the purpose of tanning, I had the pleasure of bringing Mr. Foster acquainted.

Mr. White, of Busfield plantation, in the county of Durham, has great merit in his attention to this subject. In cases where larch is felled for the proprietor's use, this appropriation of its bark must add greatly to the value of the trees; but where the timber is sold after it is stripped, the loss of admeasure-ment in the girt must be taken into consideration; as in most cases it would exceed the general allowance.

The ground which is planted with, I conceive, on an average of years, afford a greater return than had it been under a system of convertible husbandry; as it is calculated that at the expiration of sixty years, the timber on

each acre will be worth at least four hundred pounds, while the thinnings of the plantations, after thirty years' growth, will produce ten shillings an acre.

Planting, as an investment for capital, exceeds all other speculations in its profitable and certain return; as it is a sinking fund of fifteen per cent. from thirty to sixty years' growth of the trees. No country exhibits greater temptations for indulging in this beneficial and ornamental application of such parts of the surface, as would best be employed in this valuable practice, than Ireland; where wood thrives in all situations—where water carriage, at least for rafts, would easily be obtained, and where every twig, in some way or other, would add a comfort to the cottier's cabin. Thousands of acres, now waste and unprofitable, might at an easy expense be rendered more productive than land of the same average quality in England. Fencing is the principal expense. The plants, and the labor of planting them in Ireland, may by contract be obtained for three pounds, and I should calculate the fencing at about two pounds per acre. Admitting the fee simple of the ground to be worth ten pounds, these, together with compound interest in sixty years, would amount to one hundred and sixty pounds.

The value of the land per acre, covered with timber trees, at the expiration of this term, would be equal to four hundred pounds; which would leave a considerable balance in favor of the plantations, even on a supposition that the expense of planting and fencing are here underrated.

The Dublin Institution, in the year 1784, gave a premium of from two to four shillings a thousand, according to the size and age of the trees; also, for all planting which should be certified as being properly and sufficiently protected by fencing. The sum paid in eight years amounted to one thousand four hundred and ninety-four pounds, on somewhat less than twelve millions of trees, which is less than a million and a half per annum: a proof of the inconsiderable progress which planting at that time had made in this country; for on a supposition that three thousand five hundred trees had been planted per acre, the whole extent of ground planted would not have much exceeded the same number of acres. The premiums, however, had the good effect of inspiring a taste for planting, and of promoting the establishment of nurseries.

The hedge rows on this extensive estate are the particular care of its attentive owner, who

furnishes to the tenants the requisite white-thorn plants and trees : these are planted at prescribed distances in every fence by the occupiers, who are bound by their leases to protect them. Nothing can be more beautiful than timbers interspersed in hedge rows, which contribute to beautify the country, though it must be acknowledged they do not promote the interests of agriculture.

The laws in Ireland respecting planting are highly judicious. If a tenant be disposed to plant, he may register the trees he plants ; and if, on the expiration of his lease, the landlord and tenant cannot agree as to their value, a jury fixes the consideration for the trees then standing on the farm so planted ; which must be paid by the landlord, or the tenant is at liberty to convert them to his own use.

The expense of planting in England has decreased two thirds within the last twenty years ; the facility with which all kinds of plants are propagated, and obtained from the nurseries, have greatly reduced their price. Trees of less size, and fewer in number, are now considered to be the best practice in planting, while the tedium and expense of cleaning the land is generally avoided. Pitting the young trees,

300 *Value of Mr. Foster's Plantations.*

in my opinion, is the best mode, as the losses are less, and I conceive the progress of the plants greater. Had I had any indecision of opinion as to the manifest advantages of planting, the survey of this morning would have convinced me. In sixty years, Mr. Foster's plantations will be worth a greater sum than the sale of his whole estate at present would produce. Every other part of his property is under judicious management. Timber is furnished to the tenants for the buildings they may wish to erect; but they are bound to cover them with slate, no straw being permitted to be thus applied. Agriculture suffers great injury from the general practice of thatching with straw in Ireland: probably the produce of one hundred thousand acres is annually thus disposed of, which, if judiciously converted into manure, would be sufficient to supply twenty-five thousand acres of arable land.

The bogs in Ireland are, by Dr. Beaufort, estimated at two millions of acres, or nearly a ninth-part of the island—mountains, water, and wastes at about three millions; hence it follows that, if Ireland contain eighteen and a half millions of acres, thirteen and a half only can be applicable to the purposes of husbandry, which would allow but two acres and a quarter for the

subsistence of each individual of the present population; yet from the general use of potatoes, Ireland is enabled to export produce to the amount of eight millions sterling.

The farm here is only a secondary object; I shall have the pleasure of communicating my observations on its management and appearance to-morrow—till when, adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER LXVIII.

Collon, Oct. 13, 1813.

THIS morning was devoted to the inspection of the farm, the intersection of which by numerous roads renders its occupation very commodious. The yards and buildings are complete, combining every object of utility with great convenience, in the attainment of which no expense has been spared. A number of ploughs were at work, drawn by oxen; and though the soil appeared untractable, the ploughing was well done. I could not, however, but entertain an opinion that deeper ploughing would have had a good effect in rendering the surface less retentive of water; to effect which, great expense has been incurred in draining and leading off the springs. The till, or sterile clay, lies so near the surface, that as soon as the roots of the grain reach it, they become yellow, sickly, and cease to thrive: to remedy this evil the ridges are gathered by the plough to a considerable height, which, though supplying a greater portion of earth to

the plants above the till, is attended with the inconvenience of the crop ripening unequally, and when lodged in the furrows, its having no chance of rising. We saw a field extremely well fallowed and ready for sowing, which might then have been accomplished had not the rain of the preceding night precluded the attempt; and when the advanced period of the season is taken into consideration, it is not improbable that the sowing of it may be retarded till the succeeding spring.

The production of profitable green crops on such a soil, if not impracticable, must be precarious. I was somewhat surprised at the great number of acres dedicated to potatoes, which long since have appeared to me an exhausting crop, and injurious to good husbandry in all situations, as it requires so large a portion of manure without making any return; but on a poor soil baneful to the cultivator. The artificial sown grasses had not a promising appearance.

Beside the difficulties inseparable from the management of so ungenial a soil, Mr. Foster has to supply manure to a very extensive kitchen garden, from the quantity he is able to collect from the farm; this necessarily deprives it of much of the dung to which it is fairly

304 *Scotch Plough, Cart, and English Spade,*

entitled; a loss to which probably it would not be subjected, were it not, as I before stated, an object of secondary importance. Ashes, however, might be resorted to, and I should suppose successfully, in which case they would afford great relief to the dunghill heap.

A considerable head of stock appeared on the farm; the long-horned cattle had been well selected: a cross from an Indian breed had produced most gigantic animals, which seemed to be particularly well adapted to the plough or cart.

The price of labor I understood to be something less on an average than a shilling a day. I was glad to find in Mr. Foster a decided enemy to the *trusty*: he has completely banished this incumbrance from among his working laborers. The Scotch plough, cart, and English spade, are in constant use on the farm; the rent of its arable land is forty shillings an acre, and that of the meadow still higher. The usual term of leases, under similar rents, is twenty-one years, which are renewed two years before the expiration of the term. These contain several judicious clauses. The tenants are bound to keep the buildings, fences, &c., in

good repair; in case of neglect, the landlord, if such neglect be not rectified, after notice of his intention, is authorized to enter and repair himself, with power to distrain and levy to the full amount of the expense incurred.

Mr. Foster has not only no objection to, but encourages, the sub-letting of his farms, to the inhabitants of Collon, who are enabled by the shuttle and not the plough, to pay their rents. In particular situations this mode, to a certain extent, may be beneficial to the holder as well as to the proprietor; but it decides nothing as to the general policy of the measure. The pernicious effects, so evidently discernible from the general practice of sub-dividing and sub-setting estates, is not discoverable here; a disposition in the people of Collon to emigrate, and seek their fortunes remote from home, has prevented any material addition to the number of inhabitants for nearly the last century; and until within a few years, when the population, with the produce, have both been augmented in consequence of great enclosures in the neighbourhood.

The principal evil in Ireland is the absentee-ship, and neglect of the means in too many of the

upper classes for the employment of the superabundant population ; and the reprehensible love of ease, and the apathy, which prevail among the lower orders. These, augmented by the want of appropriate services for single persons, and the numerous obstacles to their search for occupations from home, unceasingly augment the population, and render the condition of all more desperate. Westmoreland, where the landed property is more divided than in any county in England, and where the respectability and comfort of the inhabitants are unequalled, would long ago have been in the same situation with Ireland, had not her hardy and industrious sons sought independency, far from their native soil, by their own virtuous exertions.

We visited Dr. Beaufort, who, on a small scale, is an excellent farmer. His mode of cultivating potatoes on wide stitches, and by frequently earthing them up, corresponds in a great measure with the practice on my own farm ; the produce, by these means, is greatly increased, and the quality of the potatoe much improved by being kept dry, which is seldom the case in the old-fashioned culture in lazy beds. Dr. Beaufort had recently reaped fifty stocks of wheat, ten sheaves to the stock, from

a statute acre ; he professes himself friendly to soiling, and the appearance of his clovers did credit to his husbandry.

The account given of the numerous regulations and improvements made in Ireland, within the last thirty years, furnishes by implication a very repulsive picture of its state and condition previous to that time. The county of Clare has always been represented as one of the poorest and most neglected in Ireland. Old stories have been preserved of customs formerly prevailing there, which would have been incredible, had they not received some sanction from the more modern details of other circumstances, equal in absurdity, by Mr. A. Young. The incongruities observable at the present moment predisposes the most unprejudiced individual, on visiting this country, to a belief, that the invincible distaste to order, fitness, and consistency, with which he is hourly amused, is inherent, and not a disposition exclusively appertaining to the present generation : as, for instance, what would excite more risibility in England, than a carriage drawn by sumptuous horses of great value, without glass in the windows, or even blinds to protect the parties within from the weather ?

308 *Considerable Expenditure on the Roads.*

The expense incurred on the roads is annually very great; above a thousand pounds are expending to reduce an acclivity of fifteen feet in the road near this place; in this work, the farmers appear to have no objection to engage, as it may possibly be some advantage to them, by their being allowed to make this labor subservient to the work on their farms. The capital of an arable farmer is reputed in all parts of the country to be small; the rent in arrears to the landlord, as I became informed on the other side of the island, forming the principal part of his capital: but this is not the case with grazing farmers, whose occupations are extensive, and whose capital must be equal, at least, to the stock which they depasture.

Fame has not done justice to Mr. Foster's merit as a scientific and extensive planter: and such is the nature of the agricultural subject on which he has to work, as to preclude the possibility of his being distinguished as a good practical farmer. On only tolerably good soil, such an exhibition of labor, perseverance, and talent would have produced very different results. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER LXIX.

Clyde Farm, Oct. 14, 1813.

WE left Collon this morning soon after six: the night had been rainy, but, consistently with our usual good fortune, though contrary to all expectation, the weather cleared up, and afforded us an opportunity of enjoying the beauty of the country. In the first part of the five miles to Ardee, the land was poor, and we had to contend with a sharp ascent; but on surmounting that difficulty, the stubbles indicated that the soil had much changed for the better, and the management of the fields, as we approached the town, did their occupiers credit.

Mr. Ruxton's seat adjoins the town of Ardee, which is a neat little place, with a handsome church nearly completed. This gentleman's farming establishment is considerable: the little we could see of it from the road disposed us to think favorably of its husbandry; it is well timbered, and the stone fences were in good repair.

310 *Colonel Filgate a spirited Improver.*

To Clyde Farm from this spot, is six miles: the whole of the way presented an interesting country. Colonel Filgate is a spirited improver, and an extensive cultivator of green crops. His loss by not hoeing his turnips is, however, very apparent. It was the duty of a man who had the shelter of a hut, to watch the turnips and prevent depredations: it is extremely vexatious to a farmer, though his loss may be more imaginary than real, to see his turnips pulled up and scattered about; a far greater loss is frequently sustained by his fences being broken down, his field-gates left open, and crops of all descriptions subjected to the encroachment of his own and his neighbours' cattle.

We passed the extensive domain of Lord Louth: on the state of his Lordship's pastures, or on the stock which we saw feeding upon them, it is impossible to observe favorably. Great pains have been taken to dot every field, by transplanting trees of considerable size, with such precision and regularity, that their ranks appeared at first sight to be in imitation of a light infantry manoeuvre: at present they add no beauty to the appearance of the place.

Two miles short of Mr. Fortescue's we crossed

the Clyde, and on its northern side observed some excellent pastures. On entering Mr. Fortescue's estate, the order and appearance of the fences, the correctness of the ploughing, and cleanness of the surface, presented a gratifying and novel picture. A farm having been recently let to Mr. Fortescue's bailiff, at five pounds an acre, a new farm-house with appropriate buildings were erecting for his occupation. The wheat stubbles bore incontestable evidence of the goodness of the last crops: on a part of these clover had been sown in drills, and a more luxuriant plant I have seldom seen. The quality of the soil is excellent—much superior to that occupied by Mr. Tandy; both gentlemen have the merit not only of understanding, but of practically pursuing, a good system of husbandry; the superiority of soil, however, gives a decided advantage to the exertions of Mr. Fortescue.

The cottages at the entrance of Clyde Farm are particularly neat, and had the effect of prepossessing me in favor of the proprietor before I had the pleasure of his acquaintance; for in my humble estimation of the marks of distinction, the proudest that can attach to any opulent residence is the apparent comfort and happi-

312 *Mr. Fortescue's Farm Yard Buildings,*

ness of the subordinate individuals by whom it is surrounded. The house is a very comfortable mansion, and uncommonly well kept: some fine old timber about it contributes to its embellishment.

The farm-yard and buildings are very commodious. Here we saw a threshing-machine on a simple construction, costing only thirty pounds, which, we understood, performed its work in a satisfactory manner; as also a well-contrived weighing-machine. On an experimental farm this latter assistant is necessary, to ascertain not only the weight of crops, but the weight of green food daily supplied to the cattle, with their weight and progressive improvement when fattening.

Mr. Fortescue soils his horses, which were in excellent condition. There were some acres of green crops, which in point of culture and cleanliness were not inferior to those of the Lothians. A crop of the white globe turnip was so luxuriant, that I wished to have its weight ascertained: I rated the produce at forty tons the statute acre—by the weighing-machine it was found somewhat to exceed my estimation. We found the iron plough at work,

and much approved: deep ploughing is practised with much success, and executed in a masterly manner. The drilling is correctly performed, and the intervals kept perfectly clean: on this depends the whole merit of the system; for where the hoeing is neglected, the practice becomes injurious. In the sedulous attention to the performance of this duty consists the chief excellence of the Norfolk husbandry. Nothing can detract from the pre-eminence to which that county and the adjoining one of Suffolk are entitled, in respect to the system of drilling.

Particular attention is paid to the culture of potatoes: the drills in which they are planted, by means of the plough, are wide, for the purpose of cleaning and earthing up the crop. As the cottiers were busily employed in taking up theirs from the lazy beds, it afforded an excellent opportunity of ascertaining the weight produced by the different modes of cultivation. Those drilled yielded at the rate of three thousand one hundred and sixty-eight stone, or one hundred and fifty barrels the Irish acre; the best of those planted on the lazy beds, one hundred barrels, or two thousand and sixty stone; but the produce most commonly obtained does

not exceed eighty barrels, or one thousand six hundred and fifty stone.

The fields are square and well fenced—the hedges in completely good order; the Clyde occasionally inundates and injures a large portion of the meadows, an evil which probably might be remedied at no heavy expense. The order and regularity which pervades every department of this establishment is highly pleasing. Wages to the cottier are a shilling a-day, and from six pence to eight pence is paid to the women.

To each of Mr. Fortescue's cottiers ground is let sufficient to graze a cow, and, when required, for providing it also with hay, beside what may be necessary for their potatoe crop: these several advantages are allowed on reasonable terms, not exceeding a rent of five or six pounds per family. I have not yet seen any cottiers who were so comfortable, or whose dwellings were so clean. All that surrounds them is stamped with an air of contentment, proclaiming the possessors satisfied and happy. This can never fail to excite a corresponding feeling in the bosom of a considerate spectator. The tithes, as usual, are here a subject of great

complaint, and, on a reduction in the price of grain, must be injurious to agriculture.

Mr. Fortescue's farm affords to his countrymen an opportunity of seeing and examining good farming management, combined with the best system of husbandry extant, without their being under the necessity of leaving their own island in search for conviction on the beneficial results of the one, or the information necessary for their own practical adoption of the other. It has, as might reasonably be expected, already created in the neighbourhood a spirit for improvement, and awakened a desire to imitate the like valuable practices. Mr. Norman, whose residence is near Mr. Fortescue, has commenced a great undertaking; his green crops are on an extensive scale, and, for a first essay, are well conducted.

The stone fences are excellent, but costly, being formed of flat stones a foot in thickness: a bank of earth is thrown up behind them, and on this is planted the white thorn, which grows through the wall on the opposite side, and makes a very permanent and ornamental fence.

I shall take my leave of this hospitable roof

with much regret, and not less solicitude for the successful result of this specimen of good farming, which I have had the great satisfaction of inspecting. Happy indeed would it be for Ireland were more such laudable examples to be found in the country. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER LXX.

Clonfeckle, Oct. 15, 1819.

THE impressions produced on my mind from our survey of Clyde Farm created at the moment much satisfaction, and will furnish many pleasing reflections hereafter. It is not possible that the spirit of industry which that example has excited should not extend and become as highly beneficial to individuals, as conducive to the general happiness of the community.

Two miles from Clyde Farm we again crossed the river, and proceeded for some miles by its side. On approaching Colville, though in itself a poor miserable town, we perceived some improvements carrying on. The soil in this neighbourhood is light, and the crops appeared to have been thin.

From Colville to Castle Blaney the fifteen miles are hilly—the cabins miserable—the country thinly inhabited, and poorly cultivated. The direction of the road, which formerly was in a

straight line over the hills, is now undergoing an alteration, by which many of the acclivities will be avoided.

Five miles from Castle Blaney is a neat cottage farm : on the grounds about it a considerable expenditure has taken place, which shows what might be expected from good management. About Castle Blaney the plantations and inclosures have a most pleasing effect on succeeding to the poor naked country through which we had passed. The church, which stands on an eminence above the town is a fine object ; an adjoining lake is also a great addition to the beauty of the place.

Lord Blaney's seat is at a short distance from the town, which is of considerable extent. It rained so violently for two hours that we were unable to leave the inn. Our engagement at Clonfeckle was paramount to all personal inconvenience, and we determined on setting out, though the rain was very heavy and with a prospect of its continuance. We escaped, however, better than at first we had reason to expect.

We had yet thirteen miles to Armagh, and six further to Dr. Richardson's. For the first eight miles we were perpetually climbing, until

we arrived in the wild regions of elevated barrenness. From the summit of the hill we had been ascending, the view of the country was very grand, extending to the neighbourhood of Lough Neagh. The city of Armagh being built on the side of a hill, whose top is occupied by the cathedral, was at a distance a very fine object: it is a considerable place; the new streets are handsome, as is the Archbishop's palace adjoining the town.

The country to Clonfeckle is well inclosed, and tolerably well cultivated. We crossed the Black Water two miles short of this hospitable mansion. The kindness with which we were received at Clonfeckle instantly obliterated the unpleasantness of a wet drive; we have, however, been so particularly favored by the weather, that it would be highly unreasonable to complain. Ireland is reputed to be a wet country, and doubtless it is so; but we have had the good fortune to pass through it in a season of remarkably dry weather.

The enthusiasm of my friend Dr. Richardson is interesting in the highest degree. All the energies of his mind at this time are directed to the propagation of the fiorin grass: in spirit and philanthropy he has few equals; the proud

distinction of being respected as the friend of his country outweighs every other consideration, and renders him insensible to the labor, trouble, and vexation which he daily encounters. Calculating on the zeal of others by his own, his expectations meet continual disappointment in the want of ardor or exertion on the part of his pupils and converts; yet in defiance of all his discouragements, he entertains not the least doubt that flax will, in time, be brought into general use and cultivation.

From the experience of its value, which I have had as a farmer, I am persuaded it has its limits: in its proper places it is highly beneficial, but these are exclusively confined to the bog, the swamp and the water meadow, where it will make a large return; but there, and there only, should it be encouraged and cultivated.

The deluge of rain which fell in the preceding four and twenty hours is by no means propitious to hay-making: and in the moment for the exhibition of his crop and his process, Dr. Richardson was unfortunate. The wind, however, this morning had become brisk from the north, with a bright sun; one hour after turning the lap-cocks, which had been cut a fortnight, prepared them for the stack.

We had an opportunity of seeing the fiorin here on various soils. The first specimen was of four years standing, planted in a clay—this was poor, and seemed to be suffering from the want of water, and the intrusion of other grasses. The second was a plot on a lighter soil, having the advantage of irrigation—this was luxuriant, and it was observable, that where it had received the greatest accession of water, there it was the most plentiful. The hay which had been made from it, with the exception of about two acres, still in lap-cocks, had been stacked in the field. Such parts of the fiorin as had not been exposed were of very fine color. I carried some of it to the horses; at first they were not disposed to eat it, but after tasting it, they seemed to prefer it to clover hay. The next crop was on a peat, from which the surface had been cut down within a few inches of the level of the water: here the fiorin, being in its most appropriate situation, was exuberantly abundant.

Under circumstances similar to the last experiment, the planting of fiorin must be a wise measure; as it brings surfaces, which before were wholly unproductive, on a par with soils of infinitely superior quality in their neighbourhood; and when the immense number of

322 *Disadvantages in cultivating Fiorin.*

such boggy acres in Ireland are taken into consideration, the benefit which may be derived by the cultivation of fiorin on them becomes a most important object, and entitles Dr. Richardson to the thanks of his country.

The weight of a crop of fiorin hay is great; probably, not less than six tons the acre. It requires to be well weeded and kept clean: it should seem that my friend's directions on this point had not even here been duly obeyed; the best specimen of fiorin was full of weeds. I am disposed to believe the difficulty of keeping these crops free from the intrusion of other grasses is greater than has been generally supposed, and that many experiments may have failed from this cause alone. Fiorin does not vegetate till late in the spring; the early grasses have from this cause a great advantage, and it becomes more difficult to be kept clean. Where water cannot be led over it, a weighty top dressing is requisite to ensure an abundant crop. Though the fiorin crops here were not equal to some of those of the Bishop of Derry, the difference is perfectly accounted for, by the superiority of his Lordship's soil, and the sullage of the town, with which some of his Lordship's crops were irrigated. The little solicitude shown Dr. Richardson in the exhibition of his crops

to the best advantage, and which a little more attention to their weeding would have effected, evidently marks the conviction and confidence of his own mind, as to the value of his adopted herbage. Fiorin may be made conducive to the cultivation of extensive tracts of land, hitherto considered as of little or no value. As an aquatic, I should not be disposed to introduce it on any ground not capable of being irrigated, and where it was not to be considered as permanent meadow. It cannot be esteemed as the rival of our best grasses, but as one which thrives prodigiously where other grasses would only exist. It will grow luxuriantly, as stated by Mr. Millar of Dalswinton in Dumfriesshire, nine hundred feet above the level of the sea. When cut a fortnight, a few days are sufficient to prepare it for stacking. It is so tenacious of life, that I should have some apprehension such parts as must unavoidably be scattered in leading and stacking, might again vegetate in the dung heap, and become a troublesome intruder on the arable part of a farm. Should I be asked whether I conceive that fiorin will become generally adopted, my reply would be, that I think and hope it will, on such soils as are proper for it; but to the exclusion of clover and other grasses, on all other lands, certainly not; for I can get as great a weight of clover

324 *Great Perseverance of Dr. Richardson.*

in three cuttings, as from the best fiorin meadow.

Dr. Richardson, is, perhaps, one of the few men in existence, who would have persevered in defiance of all the opposition and ridicule which have been raised against him; and he must be esteemed as having succeeded beyond expectation, when it is considered how slowly new practices are introduced, and how reluctantly they are adopted. Turnips have been cultivated in Norfolk and Suffolk for nearly a century, and have rendered those counties more productive than most others in the kingdom; yet their general and proper mode of cultivation is, at this day, confined to a small portion of England.

Mangel-wurzel thrives prodigiously on a peat soil; Dr. Richardson had many acres which appeared to produce heavy crops. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER LXXI.

Armagh, Oct. 16, 1813.

THIS morning we found the people engaged in cutting the fiorin: they accomplished the mowing of it with short scythes more expeditiously than I could have expected. The method pursued in making this grass into hay, is to roll it up into what is called lap-cocks, leaving a space for the air to pass through them; this is done about two days after it is mown. These cocks are occasionally turned, and after remaining about a fortnight in that state the hay is fit for stacking. With the exception of the parts exposed to rain, which turn black, the hay is of good color. Four and twenty hours' rain did not preclude its being stacked on the succeeding day; that which we saw in the morning would be quite ready and fit for stacking in the afternoon. As peat ashes answer for top dressings, the soil most appropriate for its growth happily furnishes the means for its abundant production.

It has been considered a matter of some surprise, that, in the myriads of acres so exclusively fit for flax in every province of Ireland, so few examples should occur of its adoption. In the immediate neighbourhood of Dr. Richardson there is ground to a great extent well adapted to it, but we did not observe any sign of its cultivation.

It took Mr. Coke eleven years to make a single convert to the drill husbandry, though in the midst of his own noble domain, where his popularity as a farmer was justly great, and where his tenants were opulent and could afford to speculate on any experiment of a limited nature. In this country, even with the inclination, the farmers, generally speaking, would want the means to avail themselves of any advantages of which they might become assured, from the adoption of this or any other beneficial practice.

The inequality of the surface gives particular beauty to this country, in which the general state of husbandry is bad; even the potatoe crop is much neglected, and very ill managed. We saw numerous small bleaching grounds, consequent on the weaving of linen, which is here carried on to some extent.

Armagh has so commanding an elevation, that it is seen to advantage from every quarter, and at a great distance. There are a number of good buildings in the new part of the city. The barracks are extensive, where a staff of officers and a large military force are always in garrison. Six thousand pounds have been obtained for the erection of a new church, which is in great forwardness. Great as may be the body of soldiers, and numerous as may be the charity children, it might have been supposed the interior of the cathedral was equal to their reception; but it seems to have been thought otherwise by those, who possessed sufficient influence to obtain the means for building a new church. The grounds attached to the Archbishop's palace, as I mentioned in my last letter, join the town. The palace was built by Primate Robinson, whose liberality was conspicuous on all occasions. The view of the city from the palace is very fine, and the park is well wooded.

Out of the fifteen miles to Newry, we had an ascent for the first twelve. On the summit of the hill there is a noble prospect of the great mass of Mourne Mountains, and a vast plain extending to Lough Neagh; the view altogether is prodigiously grand. Cultivation has travelled

up the hills to a great height; the population appeared to be considerable, and all the cabins were white-washed; this gives them a slightly appearance, and to the whole scene an interesting and animating character.

The approach to Newry is very fine; part of it is built on the side of a hill, and part on the banks of the Black Water. A lock two miles below the town assists the navigation, and forms a connection with the canal communicating with Lough Neagh. Vessels of considerable size are obliged to discharge a part, or the whole of their cargoes at Warren's Point, four miles below the entrance into the canal.

Within a few years the improvements in Newry have been considerable: the town has the appearance of opulence, and in the pursuit of trade and business many appeared to be earnestly engaged. The entrance to most of the considerable towns is through a painful accumulation of poverty—here it is otherwise. The new buildings are numerous; a handsome church is nearly completed. By the canal are brought down great quantities of grain, much of which is exported to England; and it has latterly formed a considerable branch of the commerce of the place.

A catholic meeting was sitting when we arrived. We, like many others, had a desire to see what was passing; the parties were by no means numerous, and the greater part of these seemed to have little more concern in the business than what was dictated by curiosity. Much warmth was exhibited by the orators, though there seemed to be no difference of opinion. As wishing well to catholic emancipation, I could not but regret that subjects should be agitated that were totally irrelative and irregular; as an instance, thanks were voted to Mr. M'Gre, the printer of a newspaper, now suffering the penalty of the law for a libel. The injudicious conduct of the friends to the question has furnished their opponents with more powerful arguments than otherwise they would have possessed.

The Scotch cart appeared to be here in general use, and we were pleased to see numbers of the people taking up potatoes with the English spade. The cabins seemed less deplorable than most we had seen, and their inhabitants less destitute of necessaries.

Dr. Bell's system of education was attempted at Armagh, and failed, on the same ground on which it was defeated at Baron's Court. The

380 *Objections to Dr. Bell's Mode of Education.*

parents objected to their children becoming monitors, nor could they be persuaded that in the teaching of others they materially forwarded their own acquirements. The emulation this post of superiority inspires is found to be highly beneficial among the pupils. An erroneous opinion is entertained as to the scarcity of schools in Ireland. I know not what formerly might be the case, but at present we have observed a very general desire to afford instruction to the rising generation in all classes of the community: neither a want of schools nor a disposition to profit by them has been found by us in the most remote situations; the happy effects of which, we may reasonably hope, will appear in the course of a few years.

To-morrow we expect a very gratifying day—the road to Rosstrevor has the reputation of having scarcely an equal in beauty. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER LXXII.

Tullamore Park, Oct. 17, 1818.

WE travelled by the side of Newry Water, which is made navigable for vessels of two hundred tons burden, by means of the lock, to which I before alluded, that opens into the bay from which they are received. We have seen no town in Ireland which for its size appeared in a more thriving state than Newry. The Black Water River approaches within a few miles of Armagh.

The boundary of Newry Water, on the southern side, is bold, and the mountains, which are cultivated to a great height, add not less to the beauty of the country than to the satisfaction of the spectator; for wherever the indications of employment and industry are discoverable, an inference may be drawn that the inhabitants are not destitute of some comforts: in all other parts of the British empire, on this inference might the benevolent observer securely rely.

The rich meadows that lie between Newry and the Lough are about two miles in length, and a mile in breadth. The hill on the northern side is covered with thriving plantations. Mr. Harrison, whose seat is on the margin of the Black Water, has been an extensive planter, and in a few years his woods will be of considerable value. As we proceeded, the south shore became very steep, and quite uncultivated; the wildness of one side contrasted with the richness of the woods covering the other, produced an agreeable effect. In point of profit the whole perhaps might be advantageously planted, but I doubt if it would add to the beauty of the scene, which is greatly assisted by the number of cottage residences near the edge of the water, some of which were highly ornamented.

At Warren's Water Ferry are the remains of an old castle; this pass, in days of yore, was considered as a military station of great strength. If at this point an iron bridge were thrown over the river, which I understand has been in contemplation, the distance to Dublin would be greatly reduced. The water, which is much contracted above the ferry, becomes greatly extended immediately below it, and is of considerable breadth before it reaches War-

ren's Point, a distance of about two miles ; where a small pier is constructed on which ships of burden partly unload, and their discharged cargoes are thence carried by lighters to Newry.

Carlingford Bay here commences — the southern shore keeps its course, while the northern recedes, and forms a bay resembling an amphitheatre, in the bosom of which stands the village Rosstrevor ; and a mile beyond it, the Mourne Mountains approach majestically to the sea. The circuit of the bay, which is not more than a mile, is covered with ornamented cottages. The convenience of sea-bathing, and the beauty of the situation, attract a great number of visitors. The hills, which are finely wooded and form the northern and eastern boundary, shut out the chilling blasts from those ungenial quarters ; while the Carlingford Hills protect the bay from the west, and leave it open to the south only. Rosstrevor stands on an eminence, and commands the whole prospect.

My expectations were excited by having heard so much of the charms of this place, but it far exceeded all I had conceived. As a winter residence for invalids requiring sea air,

I know of no spot in which are united so many advantages : the soil, which is light and dry, admits of walking exercise at all times ; and the almost surrounding mountains afford such shelter, that the frigidity of the season is little felt ; for whenever it is fair it must be pleasant.

Rosstrevor is a neat village, with some stately old wood about it. The opposite shore, though bold, appears to be thickly inhabited, and cultivated to the summit of the mountains ; about Carlingford, which is situated at the opening of the bay, the distance across which does not exceed eight miles, the country becomes much flatter.

I regretted very much that we could not devote another day to this charming place, which may justly be esteemed the Montpelier of the united empire, and infinitely exceeding that celebrated residence abroad, in every point, excepting that of climate. The influx of company has had the effect of dressing up and ornamenting every cabin ; all are said to be fully occupied in the bathing season, in consequence of the numerous attractions concentrated in Rosstrevor : this in my opinion can be no more questioned, than it can be considered a matter of wonder. Within a mile of

Rosstrevor is a small creek, which affords shelter to boats, from which place is a steep ascent for a mile through a fine oak wood: on gaining the summit, an extensive view is obtained, commanding the Carlingford coast, the bay, the mountains beyond Newry, and the enchanting landscape of Rosstrevor. The ground here, which lets from four to five pounds an acre, becomes quite flat, and so continues for the distance of about two miles to the entrance of the bay.

We travelled for a considerable distance at the foot of the Mourne Mountains, between whose base and the sea is a plain of two or three miles; their endless variety, and frequently contrasted shapes, afforded fresh objects for perpetual admiration. We had a distinct view of the Isle of Man, presenting an appearance very different from that which we have of it in Cumberland. The soil is light, and produces good barley, but in general it is wretchedly cultivated: the cabins are poor, and the fences completely out of repair. The land is said to be let at about twenty shillings the acre, which exceeds its worth in its present state, though it is capable of great improvement.

336 *Tops of Mountains covered with Snow.*

We passed Lord Kilmony's place, which is sheltered by extensive woods; a little beyond which is the village of Kilkeel, where the distance from the shore is increased by the extension of a headland into the sea: the land is of better quality, and under better management, yet there were several parties threshing out their barley on the high road.

The mountains appeared here in great majesty: some of their eminences, which are among the highest in Ireland, were already covered with snow. A little further appeared Slieve Donald, on the most elevated part of which are two cairns. The sublimity of the whole of this alpine barrier cannot well be exceeded.

We passed a newly erected farming establishment, with considerable buildings and offices; and much expense seemed to be incurred on improving the land. The want of wood and hedges give an appearance of great poverty to the country in general.

Lord Kilmony's property extends to the base of Invoick, where he has a large tract of wild uncultivated land. This he is now leasing on

the advantageous terms of three lives, and a period of forty years beyond that of the survivor. The tenants are at the whole expense of enclosing and erecting of buildings. It is supposed it will all be speedily engaged.

On leaving these improvements we entered a district which had all the appearance of having been laid waste by an invading army. The remains of walls alone indicated where habitations once stood. Curious to learn the cause of such extraordinary dilapidations, we understood that the landlord had finally disagreed with the tenants as to the quantum of rent on his granting a new term; and that on evacuating they had carried off roof, timber, doors, and windows. A chancery suit for the lands of Ballycanary was at length decided against the tenantry; but we saw no efforts to restore the condition of the estate.

The base of Slieve Donald, a little beyond this spot, advances to the sea, and forms the southern extent of Newcastle Bay: having passed round the point we had a fine view of the bay of Strongford.

The highly cultivated ground which stretches from the shore to Tullamore Park—the sump-

tuous wood and imposing aspect of Slieve Donald present a most enchanting picture.

A pier is now constructing by Lord Annesley for the protection of small craft, and the coal vessels which supply the extensive lime-works in the neighbourhood. If it answer the intended purpose, it may frequently afford shelter to such coal vessels as cannot fetch Carlingford Bay.

The ground rises with dignity from Newcastle to Tullamore Park. The house has considerable elevation above the sea; and the hanging woods which separate the domain from Slieve Donald, whose base is thus covered to a considerable height, and to an horizontal extent of nearly three miles, are very picturesque: for whilst the rich autumnal tints deepened the melancholy of its departing beauties on the base of Slieve Donald, its summit increased the interest by exhibiting the chill of winter. This mountain may be said to unite three distinct regions and characters. The first is luxuriantly covered with stately wood; the humble heath, which clothes the second, heightens by contrast the beauty of the first; while the light reflected from the snowy mantle that envelopes the third, gives relief to the sombre appearance of the

other regions ; blending, with the happiest effect, the beautiful with the grand and the sublime. I question if there exists a more surprising view, or one more affecting the sensibilities of the mind, than that which is thus suddenly presented to the spectator from the terrace. Beyond Slieve Donald are other mountains, which would command attention remote from such a neighbour.

Here are no less than one thousand one hundred acres of wood : I was so fascinated with the sight of such a forest, that the rocks and waterfalls in the river were passed with little attention ; so much was my mind engrossed by this novel and impressive object. I had nearly forgotten to mention, that the cairns on the top of Slieve Donald are of great dimensions ; in one of them it is said there are apartments for the service of mass, by the priests ; in another, in Slangallion, the room is said to be three hundred feet in circumference.

I must wait till to-morrow, to speak of many other interesting objects. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER LXXIII.

Tullamore Park, Oct. 18, 1813.

THE situation of Tullamore Park is very commanding : some inconveniences arising from its exposure decided the house to be built one story high only, with the exception of the tower in the centre : it forms a quadrangle, and contains a great number of good apartments; and though from the character of its elevation it is not entitled to be called a splendid mansion, it is certainly a very comfortable and habitable one.

The wind blew a fresh gale, which afforded us an opportunity of forming some judgment of the violence with which it must be assailed.

The extreme point of Slieve Donald is washed by the sea : the first line of mountain forms a beautiful curve, as if bent in homage of Slieve Donald. The rocks and cascades are objects generally admired : these may be seen elsewhere ; but Slieve Donald has few if any equals.

Noble Terrace-road from Rosstrevor. 341

The mountains seen beyond Slieve Donald in the back ground have also a very fine aspect.

Good taste and simplicity are always in unison, but there is a grandeur in the scenery of this place to which art can add little, and every attempt to embellish would rather detract from, than add to its magnificence.

The approach from Rosstrevor is by a noble terrace, commanding a glorious sea view—the Alpine boundary rich in sublimity and variety of outline, ending in the towering Slieve Donald, which forms an appropriate termination to the prospect. I know of no equal distance of country that possesses so much to fascinate an observer, as the line of road from Newry to Tullamore Park.

Diamond Mountain, which adjoins Slieve Donald, is certainly a fine object, but greatly inferior to its majestic neighbour, whose height is two thousand eight hundred and nine feet from the level of the sea, from whose dashing waters to the elevation of nearly seven hundred feet, it is sumptuously covered with wood.

The uninterrupted winds from the Channel do not seem to have been inimical to the plan-

tations, which are of about forty years growth. Some of the larch, of thirty-six years standing, girted seven feet, at four and a-half from the ground; and silver firs, a few years older, thirteen. The thinnings of the woods have a ready market, and are regularly sold twice a week during the greater part of the year.

I could not help regretting that a road had not been cut through the plantation, to a knoll which is almost at the extremity of the hill towards the sea, from which an extensive view of the Channel and the coast would have been obtained. The effect of this would have been wonderful, as the prospect might have been completely hid until the moment when the whole burst on the sight. The church is a neat building, and does credit to the taste and liberality of the Earl of Roden. The attention shown to comfort in the habitations of the many laborers employed is gratifying, and exhibits a benevolent consideration which ever dignifies the mansions of the great. A handsome and commodious inn has been built for the accommodation of the numerous parties who visit this enchanting spot.

Here is some little farming attempted; and had it been better conducted, I was ill qualified

to have appreciated its merits from the complete occupation of my mind in contemplating the local beauties of the place. Wages are a shilling a-day for nine months; and for the other three, ten pence.

The library contains many scarce and curious books, and the pictures present much that is worthy of inspection. The portrait of Anne Bullen, by Holbein, is an exquisite painting; those by Fuller, representing the escape of Charles the Second, are highly interesting.

The residence of Lord Roden diffuses comfort and happiness widely around. When a nobleman condescends to act as a magistrate, he has the power of being eminently useful to his neighbourhood: the law so administered becomes duly elevated and respected, and the people find it their interest to obey its directions and support its execution—rendering the too common resort to military assistance totally unnecessary; as there can be no doubt it is the distrust of impartial justice that induces man to despise the law, and become the avenger of his own injuries.

The danger and inconvenience of child-birth appear here to be little felt and less regarded

by the lower class of females. We met a poor woman, the wife of one of the woodmen, who, though in daily expectation of her confinement, was employed in laborious work, and exposed to the weather bare-footed and bare-headed, without suffering any apparent difficulty from her condition; and if report may be credited, her expected indisposition will not preclude her drudgery above two or three days! This speedy and happy recovery, we were given to understand, was not confined to the working classes, but extended to the middle ranks of society, rendering an inevitable event, and one that occurs so frequently, less alarming in female consideration.

We purpose leaving this spot to-morrow, highly delighted with its beauties, and the civilities conferred on us by its noble and hospitable proprietor. Adieu.

J. C. C.

LETTER LXXIV.

Ballilady, Oct. 19, 1813.

THE preceding night afforded us ample conviction of the exposure of Tullamore Park: a winter's gale in the night must under this roof be terrific. Contrary to all expectation the storm ceased with day-light. We had a long journey to this place, which demanded early moving; this was far from agreeable, as the season was too far advanced for an open carriage to be a pleasant mode of travelling. A tour through Ireland should commence in June, and conclude in September.

Our first point was Dundrum. We had a gratifying view, on leaving Tullamore Park, of Lord Annesley's place: there have been few greater improvers than his Lordship. Dundrum Castle forms a conspicuous object from Tullamore: it has been a place of some importance. The town is small; but the bay is extensive and forms a secure retreat for shipping. I had the

346 *A Want of Wood greatly deplored.*

satisfaction of seeing here one of our coal vessels: this brought home so pleasantly to my recollection, that, notwithstanding all the delight I had experienced, my long absence appeared to be a great sacrifice.

Near Dundrum is the residence of Mr. Morris, who is an extensive farmer, and has some good green crops. A want of wood is a defect which always gives an appearance of the want of neighbourhood and poverty to a country; and in one in which it thrives so luxuriantly, the regret felt at its absence becomes greatly augmented. The cabins here are miserable dwellings. In districts where nature has been niggardly in the dispensation of her bounties, poverty is endured as an evil of necessity; but in one teeming with abundance, the indigence of the people excites a degree of uneasiness in the mind bordering on indignation; and the spectator is led to infer that something must be wrong in the constitution of their social obligations.

The Antrim mountains began to appear, and the surface of the country was become greatly diversified.

Ballynahinch is finely situated. Mr. Carr,

who was the purchaser from Earl Moira, does not appear to have expended much on its improvement. Every thing seemed to be hastening to ruin; even for Ireland the town was remarkably dirty. It was market-day, this brought a great concourse of people together, whose general appearance was highly creditable. From Ballynahinch to Saintfield is six miles, through a poor country and a great extent of bog.

Saintfield is a neat town: the streets are well laid out, and contain some good houses. We observed several gentlemen's residences in the neighbourhood. It is six miles hence to Newtownards, which is only a little distance from the sea shore: it is a considerable town, and the market place is a handsome square.

To Lord Dafferin's, about four miles, the road rises the greater part of the way. The soil is naturally bad, but great improvements have been made round Ballilady: the house is modern and magnificent. The planting and embellishments in the grounds have made that a very fine place, which in itself possessed few natural advantages. Lord Dafferin is entitled to considerable praise as a farmer; the green crops were good, and cultivated to some extent.

§48 *Regret not visiting Wicklow and Wexford.*

From various parts of the grounds a fine view of the bay of Belfast is obtained.

Here our tour may be said to terminate, after having nearly completed the circuit of Ireland.

We have much to regret that we did not visit Wicklow and Wexford, as it is reported these counties possess much beauty, as well as some of the best cultivation in Ireland. Had we not unfortunately taken the road to Castle Isle, instead of that to Dingle, and so to Kinsale and Killarney; and if, from Waterford, we had pursued our route by the coast, we should have embraced the most interesting parts of the island. In addition to our circuit, we have crossed through a considerable portion of the interior in our expedition to Ballinasloe.

I know not how far I may have had the good fortune to make you a participator in the sensations and feelings which have been induced by the various extraordinary scenes I have surveyed. Great has been my pleasure, though, like all human gratifications, it has not been unaccompanied with some alloy.

The latent richness of the land, and inexhaustible fertility of the soil, far exceeded my expecta-

tions: the extent and opulence of the sea-ports and some of the other towns, with the resources and facilities for agriculture and commerce, greatly surpassed any previous estimate that had occurred to my mind. The picturesque beauty which may be said to pervade the country is every where grand—often sublime—always imposing: the unceasing variety of surface is peculiarly attractive of attention; and while the verdure is delightful to the eye, the luxuriance of vegetation supplies, and in some degree compensates, for the deficiency of culture.

The importance of Ireland to Great Britain far exceeds the value of which I had entertained any conception. Eight million pounds sterling of agricultural produce is at present exported, and six millions of people subsisted! The exchange with England is, for the first time, now favorable to Ireland—an incontestable proof of her prosperity, though it may be hazarding too much to pronounce it as the exclusive consequence of the Union.

The hospitality, urbanity, and frankness we uniformly received from the higher ranks, entitled them to our warmest thanks at the moment, and will ever be acknowledged by a

grateful recollection. The innate civility and intelligence of the lower orders have frequently made me ashamed of the prejudices I had so incautiously imbibed to their disadvantage.

I have contemplated with astonishment how the existence of so many rational beings could be preserved, and have wondered how their lives should be endured, under circumstances of such cruel privation ; and have not less lamented the sufferings which bigotry and ignorance have inflicted, than the misery and crimes which thus have been engendered and perpetuated.

The superabundant population I have regarded with surprise : the application of every hand to agriculture has been destructive of its interests, and has impaired the general happiness of the people. So great is the competition for land, that its rent has advanced beyond what the occupier with a living profit can afford to pay : the necessary consequence is, that the landlord's due furnishes the tenant's capital ; and as no expense is incurred by the proprietor in respect of buildings, so there are no conveniences, generally speaking, on small farms, to encourage the least effort towards better management.

Such is the general diffusion of this ruinous practice, that to correct it seems, if not wholly impossible, at present impracticable, as it will not be considered incumbent on those in possession to attempt a remedy which would demand inconvenient sacrifices, for the sole prospective benefit of successors. The general interest and happiness of a country placed in so irretrievable a predicament, and which is daily becoming worse, cannot fail to excite the most lively apprehension for the continuance of its tranquillity. The spirits of six millions of people sustained by hope alone, while exercising the most virtuous patience under the severest privations, without the means of employing themselves or of obtaining employment from others, have ample leisure to brood over the misery they endure, and, if it were requisite, to magnify every grievance they are compelled to suffer. It is not surely in human nature to be ever content under such circumstances, aggravated as they are by the want of those essentials ordained to secure the public peace in the fair and impartial distribution of justice. The benefits to which the laborer is entitled from the protection of the law, come not within the view of his pretensions : the daily execution of it by the military is familiar to his observation,

and in his community is denounced the result of tyranny ; while the religious persuasion of the great bulk of the people condemns them to ignorance, and increases and foment their prejudices.

Is it possible to contemplate such a state of human existence, in such a country, immediately under the eye of the legislature, and the administration of a free constitution, without sincerely hoping, and fervently supplicating, that the effectual protection of the former, and the benevolent dispensation of the latter, may be speedily directed to the relief of this unfortunate, mismanaged, and neglected people?

The interference of government in their behalf, if it were only by the enforcement of such rules and regulations as might be suggested for their comfort, according to the local necessities of each province or district, would not only have the popular effect of exhibiting a disposition in the state to regard their wants and meliorate their condition ; but it would be an irresistible stimulus to the individual proprietor of the soil, and the opulent capitalist, to unite in so benevolent and patriotic a work, and, by the powers which each might possess, to devise

means for the employment of the overflowing population.

The introduction of manufactories and fisheries, of trade and commerce, could not but produce a prodigious increase of manual labor, which, on being rewarded according to exertion, would soon produce industry and emulation; these would speedily create artificial wants, the indulgence in which, after a time, would disincline the people, if not to improvident, to early marriages; and thus the present increasing population might receive a check, and to a certain extent be restrained within the limits prescribed by the needed employment of the country.

Although the manner in which the Irish peasantry exists is revolting to the feelings of those unaccustomed to the inspection of their wretchedness and poverty, yet are they rich in the contentment which springs from a patient submission to their lot, from their conjugal attachment and affection to their offspring, and from a natural buoyancy of spirits, that makes the heaviest evils sit lightly on their hearts, with the exception of their being unable to earn a sufficiency to ensure the continuance of the

cabin roof over the heads of their families—a source of the greatest affliction and misery, from one end of Ireland to the other.

On having reference to so extensive a field, it would not be less possible, than wanting in gratitude, were I to omit, on this occasion, to state, that we found a general frankness and hospitality to prevail every where; and that it is a most unjust censure to charge the Irish, with a prejudice against the English. The higher ranks are too enlightened and generous a people, to attribute any of their inconveniences from political arrangements, to the individuals of the mother country. The generality of the lower orders entertain no idea on the subject; it must consequently be greatly the fault of the English visitor or traveller, and for which he would be undeserving any commiseration, if he met with any thing in Ireland which should detract from the laws of hospitality.

As far as relates to myself, I have seldom passed such a portion of my time so agreeably, or indeed so much to my gratification; and it is not among the least of the satisfactions I have derived, that my visit to Ireland has

served to correct many private, as well as public erroneous opinions, and to inspire a most ardent wish, that the real state of the country, and the condition of the people, may be more generally felt and understood.

Truly grateful for all the kindnesses we have experienced, we quit the Island to morrow. Adieu.

J. C. C.

THE END.

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